

SPRINGHAVEN

a TALE of
the
GREAT WAR



R. D. BLACKMORE



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CRIPPS THE CARRIER.	EREMA; OR, MY FATHER'S
MARY ANERLEY.	SIN.
	TOMMY UPMORE.

SPRINGHAVEN.

A TALE OF THE GREAT WAR.

BY

RICHARD DODDRIDGE BLACKMORE,

AUTHOR OF "TOMMY UPMORE," ETC.

Ἐπιμνήσομαι ἀμφοτέρων ὁμοίως.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

VOL. II.

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SPRINGHAVEN.

CHAPTER I.

FAIR IN THEORY.

ONE Saturday evening, when the dusk was just beginning to smoothe the break of billow and to blunt the edge of rock, young Dan Tugwell swung his axe upon his shoulder, with the flag basket hanging from it, in which his food had been, and in a rather crusty state of mind set forth upon his long walk home to Springhaven. As Harry Shanks had said, and almost everybody knew, an ancient footpath, little used but never yet obstructed, cut off a large bend of the shore and saved half a mile of plodding over rock and shingle. This path was very lonesome, and infested with dark places, as well as waylaid by a very piteous ghost, who never would keep to the spot where he was murdered, but might appear at any shady stretch or woody corner. Dan Tugwell knew three courageous

men, who had seen this ghost, and would take good care to avoid any further interview, and his own faith in ghosts was as stanch as in gold ; yet such was his mood this evening, that he determined to go that way and chance it, not for the saving of distance, but simply because he had been told in the yard that day, that the footpath was stopped by the landowner. “We’ll see about that,” said Dan ; and now he was going to see about it.

For the first field or two there was no impediment, except the usual stile or gate ; but when he had crossed a little woodland hollow, where the fence of the Castle-grounds ran down to the brow of the cliff, he found entrance barred. Three stout oak rails had been nailed across from tree to tree, and on a board above them was roughly painted—“No thoroughfare. Trespassers will be prosecuted.” For a moment the young man hesitated, his dread of the law being virtuously deep, and his mind well assured that his father would not back him up against settled authorities. But the shame of turning back, and the quick sense of wrong, which had long been demanding some outlet, conquered his calmer judgment, and he cast the basket from his back. Then swinging his favourite axe, he rushed at the oaken bars, and with a few strokes sent them rolling down the steep bankside.

“That for your stoppage of a right of way!” he cried; “and now perhaps you’ll want to know who done it.”

To gratify this natural curiosity, he drew a piece of chalk from his pocket, and wrote on the notice-board in large round hand—“Daniel Tugwell, son of Zebedee Tugwell, of Springhaven.” But suddenly his smile of satisfaction fled, and his face turned as white as the chalk in his hand. At the next turn of the path, a few yards before him, in the gray gloom cast by an ivy-mantled tree, stood a tall dark figure, with the right arm raised. The face was indistinct, but (as Dan’s conscience told him) hostile and unforgiving; there was nothing to reflect a ray of light, and there seemed to be a rustle of some departure, like the spirit fleeing.

The ghost! What could it be, but the ghost? Ghosts ought to be white; but terror scorns all prejudice. Probably this murdered one was buried in his breeches. Dan’s heart beat quicker than his axe had struck; and his feet were off, to beat the ground still quicker. But no Springhaven lad ever left his baggage. Dan leaped aside first to catch up his basket, and while he stooped for it, he heard a clear strong voice.

“Who are you, that have dared to come, and cut my fence down?”

No ghost could speak like that, even if he could put a fence up. The inborn courage of the youth revived, and the shame of his fright made him hardier. He stepped forward again, catching breath as he spoke, and eager to meet any man in the flesh.

“I am Daniel Tugwell, of Springhaven. And no living man shall deny me of my rights. I have a right to pass here, and I mean to do it.”

Caryl Carne, looking stately in his suit of black velvet, drew sword and stood behind the shattered barrier. “Are you ready to run against this?” he asked. “Poor peasant, go back; what are your rights worth?”

“I could smash that skewer at a blow,” said Daniel, flourishing his axe, as if to do it; “but my rights, as you say, are not worth the hazard. What has a poor man to do with rights? Would you stop a man of your own rank, Squire Carne?”

“Ah, that would be a different thing indeed! Justice wears a sword, because she belongs to the upper classes. Work-people with axes must not prate of rights, or a prison will be their next one. Your right is to be disdained, young man, because you were not born a gentleman; and your duty is to receive scorn with your hat off. You like it probably, because your father did.

But come on, Daniel ; I will not deny you of the only right an English peasant has—the right of the foot to plod in his father's footsteps. The right of the hand, and the tongue, and the stomach, even the right of the eye, is denied him ; but by some freak of law he has some little right of foot ; doubtless to enable him to go and serve his master.”

Dan was amazed, and his better sense aroused. Why should this gentleman step out of the rank of his birth to talk in this way ? Now and then Dan himself had indulged in such ideas, but always with a doubt that they were wicked, and not long enough to make them seem good in his eyes. He knew that some fellows at “the Club” talked thus ; but they were a lot of idle strangers, who came there chiefly to corrupt the natives, and work the fish-trade out of their hands. These wholesome reflections made him doubt about accepting Squire Carne’s invitation ; and it would have been good for him if that doubt had prevailed, though he trudged a thousand miles for it.

“ What ! Break down a fence, and then be afraid to enter ! That is the style of your race, friend Daniel. That is why you never get your rights, even when you dare to talk of them. I thought you were made of different stuff. Go home and boast that you shattered my fence,

and then feared to come through it, when I asked you.” Carne smiled at his antagonist, and waved his hand.

Dan leaped in a moment through the hanging splinters, and stood before the other, with a frown upon his face. “Then mind one thing, sir,” he said with a look of defiance, while touching his hat from force of habit, “I pass here, not by your permission, but of right.”

“Very well! Let us not split words;” said Carne, who had now quite recovered his native language; “I am glad to find a man that dares to claim his rights, in the present state of England. I am going towards Springhaven. Give me the pleasure of your company, and the benefit of your opinion upon politics. I have heard the highest praise of your abilities, my friend. Speak to me, just as you would to one of your brother-fishermen. By the accident of birth I am placed differently from you; and in this country that makes all the difference between a man and a dog, in our value. Though you may be, and probably are the better man—more truthful, more courageous, more generous, more true-hearted, and certain to be the more humble of the two. I have been brought up where all men are equal, and the things I see here make a new world to me. Very likely these are right, and all the rest of the world

quite wrong. Englishmen always are certain of that; and as I belong to the privileged classes, my great desire is to believe it. Only I want to know how the lower orders—the dregs, the scum, the dirt under feet, the slaves that do all the work and get starved for it—how these trampled wretches regard the question. If they are happy, submissive, contented, delighted to lick the boots of their betters, my conscience will be clear to accept their homage, and their money for any stick of mine they look at. But you have amazed me by a most outrageous act. Because the lower orders have owned a path here for some centuries, you think it wrong that they should lose their right. Explain to me, Daniel, these extraordinary sentiments."

"If you please, sir," said Dan, who was following in the track, though invited to walk by the side, of Caryl Carne, "I can hardly tell you how the lower orders feel; because father and me don't belong to them. Our family have always owned their own boat, and worked for their own hand, this two hundred years, and for all we know, ever since the Romans was here. We call them the lower orders as come round to pick up jobs, and have no settlement in our village."

"A sound and very excellent distinction, Dan. But as against those who make the laws,

and take good care to enforce them, even you (though of the upper rank here) must be counted of the lower order. For instance, can you look at a pheasant, or a hare, without being put into prison? Can you dine in the same room with Admiral Darling, or ask how his gout is without being stared at?"

"No, sir. He would think it a great impertinence, even if I dared to do such a thing. But my father might do it, as a tenant and old neighbour. Though he never gets the gout, when he rides about so much."

"What a matter-of-fact youth it is! But to come to things every man has a right to. If you saved the life of one of the Admiral's daughters, and she fell in love with you, as young people will, would you dare even lift your eyes to her? Would you not be kicked out of the house and the parish, if you dared to indulge the right of every honest heart? Would you dare to look upon her as a human being, of the same order of creation as yourself, who might one day be your wife, if you were true and honest, and helped to break down the absurd distinctions built up by vile tyranny between you? In a word, are you a man—as every man is on the Continent—or only an English slave of the lower classes?"

The hot flush of wrath, and the soft glow of

shame, met and deepened each other on the fair cheeks of this “slave”; while his mind would not come to him to make a fit reply. That his passion for Dolly, his hopeless passion, should thus be discovered by a man of her own rank, but not scorned or ridiculed, only pitied, because of his want of manly spirit,—that he should be called a “slave” because of honest modesty, and even encouraged in his wild hopes by a gentleman, who had seen all the world, and looked from a lofty distance down on it—that in a larger estimate of things there should be nothing but prejudice, low and selfish prejudice, between—well he could not think it out; that would take him many hours; let this large-minded gentleman begin again. It was so dark now, that if he turned round on him, unless he was a cat, he would be no wiser.

“ You do well to take these things with some doubt,” continued Carne, too sagacious to set up argument, which injures even young men in their own opinions; “ if I were in your place, I should do the same. Centuries of oppression have stamped out the plain light of truth, in those who are not allowed it. To me, as an individual, it is better so. Chance has ordained that I should belong to the order of those who profit by it. It is against my interest to speak as I have done. Am I likely to desire that my fences should be

broken, my property invaded, the distinction so pleasing to me set aside, simply because I consider it a false one? No, no, friend Daniel; it is not for me to move. The present state of things is entirely in my favour. And I never give expression to my sense of right and wrong, unless it is surprised from me by circumstances. Your bold and entirely just proceedings have forced me to explain why I feel no resentment, but rather admiration, at a thing which any other landowner in England would not rest in his bed until he had avenged. He would drag you before a bench of magistrates and fine you. Your father, if I know him, would refuse to pay the fine; and to prison you would go, with the taint of it to lie upon your good name for ever. The penalty would be wrong, outrageous, ruinous; no rich man would submit to it, but a poor man must. Is this the truth, Daniel, or is it what it ought to be—a scandalous misdescription of the laws of England?"

"No, sir; it is true enough, and too true, I am afraid. I never thought of consequences, when I used my axe. I only thought of what was right, and fair, and honest, as between a man who has a right, and one who takes it from him."

"That is the natural way to look at things; but never permitted in this country. You are

fortunate in having to deal with one, who has been brought up in a juster land, where all mankind are equal. But one thing I insist upon ; and remember it is the condition of my forbearance. Not a single word to any one about your dashing exploit. No gentleman in the county would ever speak to me again, if I were known to have put up with it.”

“I am sure, sir,” said Daniel in a truly contrite tone, “I never should have done such an impudent thing against you, if I had only known what a nice gentleman you are. I took you for nothing but a haughty landowner, without a word to fling at a poor fisherman. And now you go ever so far beyond what I do, in speaking of the right that every poor man hasn’t. I could listen to you by the hour, sir, and learn the difference between us and abroad.”

“Tugwell, I could tell you things that would make a real man of you. But why should I? You are better as you are ; and so are we, who get all the good out of you. And besides, I have no time for politics at present. All my time is occupied with stern business—collecting the ruins of my property.”

“But, sir,—but you come down here sometimes from the Castle in the evening ; and if I might cross, without claiming right of way, sometimes I might have the luck to meet you.”

“Certainly you may pass, as often as you please, and so may anybody who sets value on his rights. And if I should meet you again, I shall be glad of it. You can open my eyes doubtless, quite as much as I can yours. Good-night, my friend, and better fortunes to you !”

“It was worth my while to nail up those rails,” Carne said to himself, as he went home to his ruins ; “I have hooked that clod, as firm as ever he hooked a cod. But, thousand thunders, what does he mean by going away without touching his hat to me ?”

CHAPTER II.

FOUL IN PRACTICE.

“ I HOPE, my dear, that your ride has done you good,” said the rector’s wife to the rector, as he came into the hall with a wonderfully red face, one fine afternoon in October ; “ if colour proves health, you have gained it.”

“ Maria, I have not been so upset for many years. Unwholesome indignation dyes my cheeks ; and that is almost as bad as indigestion. I have had quite a turn—as you women always put it. I am never moved by little things, as you know well, and sometimes to your great disgust ; but to-day my troubles have conspired to devour me. I am not so young as I was, Maria. And what will the parish come to, if I give in ? ”

“ Exactly, dear ; and therefore you must not give in.” Mrs. Twemlow replied with great spirit ; but her hands were trembling, as she helped him to pull off his new riding-coat. “ Remember your own exhortations, Joshua ; I

am sure they were beautiful, last Sunday. But take something, dear, to restore your circulation. A reaction in the system is so dangerous."

"Not anything at present," Mr. Twemlow answered firmly; "these mental cares are beyond the reach of bodily refreshments. Let me sit down, and relate my adventures, and then you may give me a glass of treble X. In the first place, the pony nearly kicked me off, when that idiot of a Stubbard began firing from his battery. What have I done, or my peaceful flock, that a noisy set of guns should be set up amidst us? However, I let him know that he had a master, though I shall find it hard to come downstairs to-morrow. Well, the next thing was that I saw James Cheeseman, Churchwarden Cheeseman, buttery Cheeseman—as the bad boys call him—in the lane, in front of me not more than thirty yards, as plainly as I now have the pleasure of seeing you, Maria; and while I said 'kuck' to the pony, he was gone! I particularly wished to speak to Cheeseman, to ask him some questions about things I have observed, and especially his sad neglect of public worship—a most shameful example on the part of a Churchwarden; and I was thinking how to put it, affectionately yet firmly—when to my great surprise there was no Cheeseman to receive it! I called at his house on my return, about three

hours afterwards, having made up my mind to have it out with him, when they positively told me—or at least Polly Cheeseman did—that I must be mistaken about her ‘dear papa,’ because he was gone in the pony-shay all the way to Uckfield, and would not be back till night.”

“The nasty little story-teller!” Mrs. Twemlow cried. “But I am not at all surprised at it, when I saw how she had got her hair done up, last Sunday.”

“No, Polly believed it. I am quite sure of that. But what I want to tell you is much stranger and more important, though it cannot have anything at all to do with Cheeseman. You know, I told you I was going for a good long ride; but I did not tell you where, because I knew that you would try to stop me. But the fact was that I had made up my mind to see what Caryl Carne is at, among his owls and ivy. You remember the last time I went to the old place, I knocked till I was tired, but could get no answer, and the window was stopped with some rusty old spiked railings, where we used to be able to get in at the side. All the others are out of reach, as you know well; and being of a yielding nature, I came sadly home. And at that time, I still had some faith in your friend Mrs. Stubbard, who promised to find out all about him, by means of Widow Shanks and the

dimity-parlour. But nothing has come of that ; poor Mrs. Stubbard is almost as stupid as her husband ; and as for Widow Shanks—I am quite sure, Maria, if your nephew were plotting the overthrow of King, Church, and Government, that deluded woman would not listen to a word against him.”

“ She calls him a model, and a blessed martyr ; ” Mrs. Twemlow was smiling at the thought of it ; “ and she says she is a woman of great penetration, and never will listen to anything. But it only shows what I have always said, that our family has a peculiar power, a sort of attraction, a superior gift of knowledge of their own minds, which makes them—but there, you are laughing at me, Joshua ! ”

“ Not I ; but smiling at my own good fortune, that ever I get my own way at all. But, Maria, you are right ; your family has always been distinguished for having its own way—a masterful race, and a mistressful ! And so much the more do the rest of mankind grow eager to know all about them. In an ordinary mind, such as mine, that feeling becomes at last irresistible, and finding no other way to gratify it, I resolved to take the bull by the horns, or rather by the tail, this morning. The poor old Castle has been breaking up most grievously, even within the last twenty years, and you, who have played as

a child among the ruins of the ramparts, would scarcely know them now. You cannot bear to go there, which is natural enough, after all the sad things that have happened ; but if you did, you would be surprised, Maria ; and I believe a great part has been knocked down on purpose. But you remember the little way in from the copse, where you and I, five-and-thirty years ago——”

“Of course I do, darling. It seems but yesterday ; and I have a flower now which you gathered for me there. It grew at a very giddy height upon the wall, full of cracks and places where the evening star came through ; but up you went, like a rocket or a racehorse ; and what a fright I was in, until you came down safe ! I think that must have turned the balance of my mind to have nobody, except my Joshua.”

“Well, my dear, you might have done much worse. But I happened to think of that way in, this morning, when you put up your elbow, as you made the tea, exactly as you used to do when I might come up there. And that set me thinking of a quantity of things, and among them this plan, which I resolved to carry out. I took the trouble first to be sure that Caryl was down here for the day, under the roof of Widow Shanks ; and then I set off by the road up the hill, for the stronghold of all the Carnes.

Without further peril than the fight with the pony, and the strange apparition of Cheeseman about half a mile from the back entrance, I came to the copse where the violets used to be, and the sorrel, and the lords and ladies. There I tethered our friend Juniper in a quiet little nook, and crossed the soft ground, without making any noise, to the place we used to call our little postern. It looked so sad, compared with what it used to be, so desolate and brambled up and ruinous, that I scarcely should have known it, except for the grey pedestal of the prostrate dial we used to moralise about. And the ground inside it, that was nice turf once, with the rill running down it that perhaps supplied the moat —all stony now, and overgrown, and tangled, with ugly-looking elder-bushes sprawling through the ivy. To a painter it might have proved very attractive ; but to me it seemed so dreary, and so sombre, and oppressive, that although I am not sentimental, as you know, I actually turned away, to put my little visit off, until I should be in better spirits for it. And that, my dear Maria, would in all probability have been never.

“ But before I had time to begin my retreat, a very extraordinary sound, which I cannot describe by any word I know, reached my ears. It was not a roar, nor a clank, nor a boom, nor a clap, nor a crash, nor a thud—but if you have

ever heard a noise combining all those elements, with a small percentage of screech to enliven them, that comes as near it as I can contrive to tell. We know from Holy Scripture that there used to be such creatures as dragons, though we have never seen them; but I seemed to be hearing one, as I stood there. It was just the sort of groan you might have expected from a dragon, who had swallowed something highly indigestible."

" My dear ! And he might have swallowed you, if you had stopped. How could you help running away, my Joshua ? I should have insisted immediately upon it. But you are so terribly intrepid ! "

" Far from it, Maria. Quite the contrary, I assure you. In fact I did make off, for a considerable distance ; not rapidly as a youth might do, but with self-reproach at my tardiness. But the sound ceased coming, and then I remembered how wholly we are in the hand of the Lord. A sense of the power of right rose within me, backed up by a strong curiosity ; and I said to myself that if I went home, with nothing more than that to tell you, I should not have at all an easy time of it. Therefore I resolved to face the question again, and ascertain, if possible, without self-sacrifice, what was going on among the ruins. You know every stick and stone, as

they used to be, but not as they are at present ; therefore I must tell you. The wall at the bottom of the little Dial-court, where there used to be a sweet-briar hedge to come through, is entirely gone, either tumbled down or knocked down—the latter I believe to be the true reason of it. Also, instead of sweet-briar there is now a very flourishing crop of sting-nettles. But the wall at the side of the little court stands almost as sound as ever ; and what surprised me most was to see when I got further, proceeding of course very quietly, that the large court beyond (which used to be the servants' yard, and the drying-ground, and general lounging-place) had a timber-floor laid down it, with a rope on either side, a long heavy rope on either side ; and these ropes were still quivering, as if from a heavy strain just loosened. All this I could see, because the high door with the spikes, that used to part the Dial-court from this place of common business, was fallen forward from its upper hinge, and splayed out so that I could put my fist through.

“ By this time, I had quite recovered all my self-command, and was as calm as I am now, or even calmer ; because I was under that reaction which ensues, when a sensible man has made a fool of himself. I perceived, without thinking, that the sound which had so scared me pro-

ceeded from this gangway, or timberway, or staging, or whatever may be the right word for it ; and I made up my mind to stay where I was, only stooping a little with my body towards the wall, to get some idea of what might be going forward. And then I heard a sort of small hubbub of voices, such as foreigners make, when they are ordered to keep quiet, and have to carry on a struggle with their noisy nature.

“ This was enough to settle my decision not to budge an inch, until I knew what they were up to. I could not see round the corner, mind —though ladies seem capable of doing that, Maria—and so these fellows, who seemed to be in two lots, some at the top, and some at the bottom of the plankway, were entirely out of my sight as yet, though I had a good view of their sliding-plane. But presently the ropes began to strain and creak, drawn taut—as our fishermen express it—either from the upper or the lower end, and I saw three barrels come sliding down ; sliding, not rolling (you must understand), and not as a brewer delivers beer into a cellar. These passed by me ; and after a little while, there came again that strange sepulchral sound, which had made me feel so uneasy.

“ Maria, you know that I can hold my own, against almost anybody in the world, but you ; and although this place is far outside my parish

boundaries, I felt that as the uncle of the present owner—so far at least as the lawyers have not snapped him up—and the brother-in-law of the previous proprietor, I possessed an undeniable legal right—*quo warranto*, or whatever it is called—to look into all proceedings on these premises. Next to Holy Scripture, Horace is my guide and guardian; and I called to mind a well-known passage, which may roughly be rendered thus—‘If the crushed world tumble on him, the ruins shall strike him undismayed.’ With this in my head, I went softly down the side-wall of the Dial-court (for there was no getting through the place where I had been peeping) to the bottom, where there used to be an old flint wall, and a hedge of sweet-briar in front of it. You remember the pretty conceit I made—quaint and wholesome, as one of Herrick’s, when you said something—but I verily believe we were better in those days than we ever have been since. Now don’t interrupt me about that, my dear.

“ Some of these briars still were there, or perhaps some of their descendants, straggling weakly among the nettles, and mullein, and other wild stuff, but making all together a pretty good screen, through which I could get a safe side-view of the bottom of the timber gangway. So I took off my hat, for some ruffian fellows

like foreign sailors were standing below, throwing out their arms, and making noises in their throats, because not allowed to scream as usual. It was plain enough at once to any one who knew the place, that a large hole had been cut in the solid castle-wall, or rather, a loophole had been enlarged very freely on either side, and brought down almost to the level of the ground outside. On either side of this great opening stood three heavy muskets at full cock ; and it made my blood run cold, to think how likely some fatal discharge appeared. If I had been brought up to war, Maria, as all the young people are bound to be now, I might have been more at home with such matters, and able to reconnoitre calmly ; but I thought of myself, and of you, and Eliza, and what a shocking thing it would be for all of us—but a merciful Providence was over me.

“ Too late I regretted the desire for knowledge, which had led me into this predicament ; for I durst not stir now from my very sad position, for my breath would soon fail me, and my lower limbs are thick from the exercise of hospitality. How I longed for the wings of a dove, or at any rate for the legs of Lieutenant Blyth Scudamore ! And my dark apprehensions gained double force, when a stone was dislodged by my foot (which may have trembled) and rolled with a sharp echo

down into the ballium, or whatever it should be called, where these desperadoes stood. In an instant three of them had their long guns pointed at the very thicket which sheltered me, and if I had moved or attempted to make off, there would have been a vacancy in this preferment. But luckily a rabbit, who had been lying as close as I had, and as much afraid of me perhaps as I was of those ruffians, set off at full speed from the hop of the stone, and they saw him, and took him for the cause of it. This enabled me to draw my breath again, and consider the best way of making my escape, for I cared to see nothing more, except my own house-door.

“ Happily the chance was not long in coming. At a shout from below, which seemed to me to be in English, and sounded uncommonly like ‘now then!’—all those fellows turned their backs to me, and began very carefully to lower, one by one, the barrels that had been let down the incline. And other things were standing there, besides barrels; packing-cases, crates, very bulky-looking boxes, and low massive wheels, such as you often see to artillery. You know what a vast extent there is of cellars and vaults below your old castle, most of them nearly as sound as ever, and occupied mainly by empty bottles, and the refuse of past hospitality. Well, they are going to fill these with something,—

French wines, smuggled brandy, contraband goods of every kind you can think of, so long as high profit can be made of them. That is how your nephew Caryl means to redeem his patrimony. No wonder that he has been so dark and distant. It never would have done to let us get the least suspicion of it, because of my position in the Church, and in the Diocese. By this light a thousand things are clear to me, which exceeded all the powers of the Sphinx till now."

"But how did you get away, my darling Joshua?" Mrs. Twemlow enquired, as behoved her. "So fearless, so devoted, so alive to every call of duty—how could you stand there, and let the wretches shoot at you?"

"By taking good care not to do it," the rector answered simply. "No sooner were all their backs towards me, than I said to myself that the human race happily is not spiderine. I girt up my loins, or rather fetched my tails up under my arms very closely, and glided away, with the silence of the serpent, and the craft of the enemy of our fallen race. Great care was needful, and I exercised it; and here you behold me, unshot and unshot-at, and free from all anxiety, except a pressing urgency for a bowl of your admirable soup, Maria, and a cut from the saddle I saw hanging in the cellar."

CHAPTER III.

MATERNAL ELOQUENCE.

SUFFICIENT for the day is the evil thereof; and more than sufficient with most of us. Mr. Twemlow and his wife resolved discreetly, after a fireside council, to have nothing to say to Carne Castle, or about it, save what might be forced out of them. They perceived most clearly, and very deeply felt, how exceedingly wrong it is for anybody to transgress, or even go aside of the laws of his country, as by Statute settled. Still, if his ruin had been chiefly legal; if he had been brought up under different laws, and in places where they made those things which he desired to deal in; if it was clear that those things were good, and their benefit might be extended to persons who otherwise could have no taste of them; above all, if it were the first and best desire of all who heard of it to have their own fingers in the pie—then let others stop it, who by duty and interest were so minded; the rector was not in the Commission

of the Peace—though he ought to have been there years ago—and the breach of the law, if it came to that, was outside of his parish boundary. The voice of the neighbourhood would be with him, for not turning against his own nephew; even if it ever should come to be known that he had reason for suspicions.

It is hard to see things in their proper light, if only one eye has a fly in it; but if both are in that sad condition, who shall be blamed for winking? Not only the pastor, but all his flock, were in need of wire-spectacles now, to keep their vision clear, and their foreheads calm. Thicker than flies around the milk-pail, rumours came flitting daily, and even the night—the fair time of thinking—was busy with buzzing multitude.

“Long time have I lived, and a sight have I seed,” said Zebedee Tugwell to his wife, “of things as I couldn’t make no head nor tail of; but nothing to my knowledge ever coom nigh the sort of way our folk has taken to go on. Parson Twemlow told us, when the war began again, that the Lord could turn us all into Frenchmen, if we sinned against Him more than He could bear. I were fool enough to laugh about it then, not intaking how it could be on this side of Kingdom Come, where no distinction is of persons. But now, there it is—a thing the Almighty hath in

hand ; and who shall say Him nay, when He layeth His hand to it ? ”

“ I reckon, a’ hath begun with you too, Zeb ; ” Mrs. Tugwell would answer undesirably. “ To be always going on so about trash trifles, as a woman hath a right to fly up at, but no man ! Surely Dan hath a right to his politics and his parables, as much as any lame old chap that sitteth on a bench. He works hard all day, and he airns his money ; and any man hath a right to wag his tongue of night-time, when his arms and his legs have been wagging all day.”

“ Depends upon how he wags ‘un ; ” the glance of old Tugwell was stern, as he spoke, and his eyebrows knitted over it ; “ if for a yarn, to plaise children or maidens, or a bit of argyment about his business, or talk about his neighbours, or aught that consarns him—why lads must be fools, and I can smoke my pipe, and think that at his age I was like him. But when it comes to talking of his betters, and the Government, and the right of everybody to command the ship, and the soup—soup, what was it ? ”

“ Superior position of the working classes, dignity of labour, undefeasible rights of mankind to the soil as they was born in, and soshallistick —something.”

“ So—shall I—stick equality,” Mr. Tugwell

amended triumphantly ; “ and so shall I stick him, by the holy poker, afore the end of the week is out. I’ve a’ been fool enough to leave off ropes-ending of him now, for a matter of two years ; because a’ was good, and outgrowing of it like, and because you always coom between us. But mind you, mother, I’ll have none of that, next time. Business I means ; and good measure it shall be.”

“ Zeb Tugwell,” said his wife, longing greatly to defy him, but frightened by the steadfast gaze she met, “ you can never mean to say that you would lay your hand on Dan—a grown man, a’most as big as yourself, and a good half-head taller ! Suppose he was to hit you back again ? ”

“ If he did, I should just kill him,” Zeb answered calmly. “ He would be but a jellyfish in my two hands. But there, I’ll not talk about it, mother. No need to trouble you with it. ‘Tis none of my seeking—the Lord in heaven knows—but a job as He hath dutified for me to do. I’ll go out, and have my pipe, and dwell on it.”

“ And I may lay a deal of it on myself”—Mrs. Tugwell began to moan, as soon as he was gone ; “ for I have cockered Dan up, and there’s no denying it, afore Tim, or Tryphena, or Tabby, or Debby, or even little Solomon. Because he were the first, and so like his dear father, afore

he got on in the world so. Oh, it all comes of that, all the troubles comes of that, and of laying up of money, apart from your wife, and forgetting almost of her Christian name! And the very same thing of it—money, money, and the getting on with breeches that requireth no mending, and the looking over Church-books at gay young ladies—all of it leadeth to the same bad end of his betters, and the Government, and the Soshallistick Quality.

“Why, with all these mercies,” continued Mrs. Tugwell, though not in a continuous frame of mind, as Daniel came in, with a slow heavy step, and sat down by the fire in silence, “all these mercies, as are bought and paid for, from one and sixpence up to three half-crowns, and gives no more trouble beyond dusting once a week,—how any one can lay his eyes on other people’s property, without consideration of his own, as will be after his poor mother’s time, is to me quite a puzzle and a pin-prick. Not as if they was owing for, or bought at auction, or so much as beaten down by sixpence; but all at full price and own judgment, paid for by airnings of labour and perils of the deep. And as Widow Shanks said, the last time she was here, by spoiling of the enemies of England, who makes us pay tremenjous for ‘most everything we lives on. And I know who would understand them

crackeries, and dust them when I be gone to dust, and see her own pretty face in them, whenever they has the back-varnish."

Dan knew that the future fair owner and duster designed by his mother was Miss Cheeseman, towards whom he had cherished tender yearnings, in the sensible and wholesome days. And if Polly Cheeseman had hung herself on high—which she might have done without a bit of arrogance—perhaps she would still have been to this young man the star of fate and glory, instead of a dip, thirty-two to the pound; the like whereof she sold for a farthing. Distance makes the difference.

"He that won't afford heed shall pay dear in his need;" the good mother grew warm, as the son began to whistle; "and to my mind, Master Dan, it won't be long afore you have homer things to think of than politics. 'Politics is fiddlesticks' was what men of my age used to say; sensible men with a house and freehold, and a pig of their own, and experience. And such a man I might have had, and sensible children by him, children as never would have whistled at their mother, if it hadn't been for your poor father, Dan. Misguided he may be, and too much of his own way, and not well enough in his own mind to take in a woman's—but for all that he hath a right to be

honoured by his children, and to lead their minds in matters touching of the King, and Church, and true religion. Why only last night, no, the night afore last, I met Mrs. Prater, and I said to her——”

“ You told me all that, mother ; and it must have been a week ago ; for I have heard it every night this week. What is it you desire that I should do, or say, or think ? ”

“ Holy mercy ! ” cried Mrs. Tugwell, “ what a way to put things, Dan ! All I desire is for your good only, and so leading on to the comfort of the rest. For the whole place goes wrong, and the cat sits in the corner, when you go on with politics as your dear father grunts at. No doubt it may all be very fine and just, and worth a man giving his life for, if he don’t care about it, nor nobody else—but even if it was to keep the French out, and yourn goeth nearer to letting them in, what difference of a button would it make to us, Dan, compared to our sticking together, and feeding with a knowledge and a yielding to the fancies of each other ? ”

“ I am sure it’s no fault of mine,” said Daniel, moved from his high ropes by this last appeal ; “ to me it never matters twopence what I have for dinner, and you saw me give Tim all the brown of the baked potatoes, the very last time I had my dinner here. But what comes

above all those little bothers is the necessity for insisting upon freedom of opinion. I don't pretend to be so old as my father, nor to know so much as he knows about the world in general. But I have read a great deal more than he has, of course, because he takes a long time to get a book with the right end to him ; and I have thought, without knowing it, about what I have read, and I have heard very clever men (who could have no desire to go wrong, but quite the other way) carrying on about these high subjects, beyond me, but full of plain language. And I won't be forced out of a word of it, by fear."

"But for love of your mother, you might keep it under, and think it in your throat, without bringing of it out, in the presence of your elders. You know what your father is—a man as never yet laid his tongue to a thing without doing of it—right or wrong, right or wrong ; and this time he hath right, and the law, and the Lord, and the King himself, to the side of him. And a rope's end in his pocket, Dan, as I tried to steal away, but he were too wide-awake. Such a big hard one you never did see ! "

"A rope's end for me, well turned twenty years of age ! " cried Daniel, with a laugh, but not a merry one ; "two can play at that game, mother. I'll not be ropes-ended by nobody."

“Then you’ll be rope-noosed ;” the poor mother fell into the settle, away from the fire-light, and put both hands over her eyes, to shut out the spectacle of Dan dangling ; “or else your father will be, for you. Ever since the Romans, Dan, there have been Tugwells, and respected ten times more than they was. Oh do ‘e, do ‘e think ; and not bring us all to the grave, and then the gallows ! Why I can mind the time, no more agone than last Sunday, when you used to lie here in the hollow of my arm, without a stitch of clothes on, and kind people was tempted to smack you in pleasure, because you did stick out so prettily. For a better-formed baby there never was seen, nor a finer-tempered one, when he had his way. And the many nights I walked the floor with you, Dan, when your first tooth was coming through, the size of a horse-radish, and your father most wonderful to put up with my coo to you, when he had not had a night in bed for nigh three weeks—oh, Dan, do ‘e think of things as consarneth your homer life, and things as is above all reason ; and let they blessed politics go home to them as trades in them.”

Mrs. Tugwell’s tender recollections had given her a pain in the part where Dan was nursed, and driven her out of true logical course ; but she came back to it, before her son had time to

finish the interesting pictures of himself which she had suggested.

“ Now can you deny a word of that, Dan ? And if not, what is there more to say ? You was smacked as a little babe, by many people kindly, when ever so much tenderer than you now can claim to be. And in those days you never could have deserved it yet, not having framed a word beyond ‘ Mam,’ and ‘ Da,’ and both of those made much of, because doubtful. There was nothing about the Constitooshun then, but the colour of the tongue and the condition of the bowels ; and if any fool had asked you what politics was, you would have sucked your thumb, and offered them to suck it ; for generous you always was, and just came after. And what cry have bigger folk, grown up and wicked, to make about being smacked, when they deserve it, for meddling with matters outside of their business, by those in authority over them ? ”

“ Well, mother, I dare say you are right ; though I don’t altogether see the lines of it. But one thing I will promise you—whatever father does to me, I will not lift a hand against him. But I must be off. I am late already.”

“ Where to, Dan ? Where to ? I always used to know, even if you was going courting. Go a’courting, Dan, as much as ever you like, only don’t make no promises. But whatever

you do, keep away from that bad, wicked, Free and Frisky Club, my dear."

"Mother, that's the very place I am just bound to. After all you have said, I would have stayed away to-night, except for being on the list, and pledged in honour to twenty-eight questions, all bearing upon the grand issues of the age."

"I don't know no more than the dead, what that means, Dan. But I know what your father has got in his pocket for you. And he said the next time you went there, you should have it."

CHAPTER IV.

PATERNAL DISCIPLINE.

“THE Fair, Free, and Frisky”—as they called themselves, were not of a violent order at all, neither treasonable, nor even disloyal. Their Club, if it deserved the name, had not been of political, social, or even convivial intention, but had lapsed unawares into all three uses, and most of all that last mentioned. The harder the times are, the more confidential (and therefore convivial) do Englishmen become; and if Free-trade survives with us for another decade, it will be the death of total abstinence. But now they had bad times, without Free-trade—that Goddess being still in the goose-egg—and when two friends met, without a river between them, they were bound to drink one another’s health, and did it, without the unstable and cold-blooded element. The sense of this duty was paramount among the “Free and Frisky,” and without it their final cause would have vanished long ago, and therewith their formal one.

None of the old-established folk of the blue blood of Springhaven, such as the Tugwells, the Shanks, the Praters, the Bowleses, the Stick-fasts, the Blocks, or the Kedgers, would have anything to do with this Association, which had formed itself among them, like an anti-corn-law league, for the destruction of their rights and properties. Its origin had been commercial, and its principles aggressive; no less an outrage being contemplated than the purchase of fish at low figures on the beach, and the speedy distribution of that slippery ware among the nearest villages and towns. But from time immemorial, the trade had been in the hands of a few staunch factors, who paid a price governed by the seasons and the weather, and sent the commodity as far as it would go, with soundness, and the hope of freshness. Springhaven believed that it supplied all London, and was proud and blest in so believing. With these barrowmen, hucksters and pedlars of fish, it would have no manifest dealing; but if the factors who managed the trade chose to sell their refuse or surplus to them, that was their own business. In this way perhaps, and by bargains on the sly, these petty dealers managed to procure enough to carry on their weekly enterprise, and for a certain good reason took a room and court-yard handy to the *Darling Arms*, to discuss other people's business

and their own. The good reason was that they were not allowed to leave the village, with their barrows or trucks or baskets, until the night had fallen, on penalty of being pelted with their own wares. Such was the dignity of this place, and its noble abhorrence of anything low.

The vision of lofty institutions, which one may not participate, inspires in the lower human nature more jealousy than admiration. These higglerers may have been very honest fellows, in all but pecuniary questions, and possibly continued to be so in the bosom of their own families. But here in Springhaven, by the force of circumstances, they were almost compelled to be radicals; even as the sweetest cow's milk turns sour, when she can just reach clover with her breath, but not her lips. But still they were not without manners, and reason, and good-will to people who had patience with them. This enabled them to argue lofty questions, without black eyes, or kicking, or even tweak of noses; and a very lofty question was now before them.

To get once into Admiral Darling's employment was to obtain a vested interest; so kind was his nature and so forgiving, especially when he had scolded anybody. Mr. Swipes, the head-gardener for so many years, held an estate of freehold in the garden—although he had no head, and would never be a gardener, till the

hanging gardens of Babylon should be hung on the top of the tower of Babel—with a vested remainder to his son, and a contingent one to all descendants. Yet this man, although his hands were generally in his pockets, had not enough sense of their linings to feel that continuance, usage, institution, orderly sequence, heredity, and such like, were the web of his coat, and the wool of his breeches, and the warmth of his body inside them. Therefore he never could hold aloof from the Free and Frisky gatherings, and accepted the chair upon Bumper-nights, when it was a sinecure benefice.

This was a Bumper-night, and in the chair sat Mr. Swipes, discharging gracefully the arduous duties of the office, which consisted mainly in calling upon members for a speech, a sentiment, or a song, and in default of mental satisfaction, bodily amendment by a pint all round. But as soon as Dan Tugwell entered the room, the Free and Friskies with one accord returned to loftier business. Mr. Swipes, the gay Liber of the genial hour, retired from the chair, and his place was taken by a Liberal—though the name was not yet invented—estranged from his own God-father. This was a hard man, who made salt herrings, and longed to cure everything fresh in the world.

Dan, being still a very tender youth, and

quite unaccustomed to public speaking, was abashed by these tokens of his own importance, and heartily wished that he had stopped at home. It never occurred to his simple mind that his value was not political, but commercial; not "anthropological," but fishy; the main ambition of the Free and Frisky Club having long been the capture of his father. If once Zeb Tugwell could be brought to treat, a golden era would dawn upon them, and a boundless vision of Free-trade, when a man might be paid for refusing to sell fish, as he now is for keeping to himself his screws. Dan knew not these things, and his heart misgave him, and he wished that he had never heard of the twenty-eight questions set down in his name for solution.

However, his disturbance of mind was needless, concerning those great issues. All the members, except the chairman, had forgotten all about them; and the only matter they cared about was to make a new member of Daniel. A little flourish went on about large things (which nobody knew, or cared to know), then the table was hammered with the heel of a pipe, and Dan was made a Free and Frisky. An honorary member, with nothing to pay, and the honour on their side, they told him; and every man rose, with his pot in one hand and his pipe in the other, yet able to stand, and to thump with his

heels, being careful. Then the President made entry in a book, and bowed, and Dan was requested to sign it. In the fervour of good will, and fine feeling, and the pride of popularity, the young man was not old enough to resist, but set his name down firmly. Then all shook hands with him, and the meeting was declared to be festive, in honour of a new and noble member.

It is altogether wrong to say—though many people said it—that young Dan Tugwell was even a quarter of a sheet in the wind, when he steered his way home. His head was as solid as that of his father; which instead of growing light, increased in specific, generic, and differential gravity, under circumstances which tend otherwise, with an age that expects to keep sober without practice. All Springhaven folk had long practice in the art of keeping sober; and if ever a man went home at night with his legs outside his influence, it was more from defect of proper average lately, than from excess of the moment.

Be that as it may, the young man came home with an enlarged map of the future in his mind, a brisk and elastic rise in his walk, and his head much encouraged to go on with liberal and truly exalted visions. In accordance with these, he expected his mother to be ready to embrace him at the door; while a saucepan should simmer on the good-night of the wood-ash, with just as

much gentle breath of onion from the cover, as a youth may taste dreamily from the lips of love. But oh, instead of this, he met his father, spread out and yet solid across the doorway, with very large arms bare and lumpy in the gleam of a fireplace uncrowned by any pot. Dan's large ideas vanished, like a blaze without a bottom.

“Rather late, Dan’el ; ” said the captain of Springhaven, with a nod of his great head, made gigantic on the ceiling ; “all the rest are abed, the proper place for honest folk. I suppose you’ve been airning money, overtime ? ”

“Not I,” said Dan ; “I work hard enough all day. I just looked in at the Club, and had a little talk of politics.”

“The Club, indeed ! The stinking barrow-grinders ! Did I tell you, or did I forget to tell you, never to go there no more ? ”

“You told me fast enough, father ; no doubt about that. But I am not aboard your boat, when I happen on dry land ; and I am old enough now to have opinions of my own.”

“Oh, that’s it, is it ? And to upset all the State, the King, the House of Lords, and the Parliamentary House, and all as is descended from the Romans ? Well, and what did their Wusships say to you ? Did they anoint you king of slooshings ? ”

“Father, they did this—and you have a right

to know it ; ” Dan spoke with a grave debative tone, though his voice became doubtful, as he saw that his father was quietly seeking for something ; “ almost before I knew what was coming, they had made me a member, and I signed the book. They have no desire to upset the kingdom ; I heard no talk of that kind, only that every man should have his own opinions, and be free to show what can be said for them. And you know, father, that the world goes on, by reason, and justice, and good will, and fair play——”

“ No, it don’t,” cried the captain, who had found what he wanted ; “ if it had to wait for they, it would never go on at all. It goes on by government, and management, and discipline, and the stopping of younkers from their blessed foolery, and by the ten commandments, and the proverbs of King Solomon. You to teach your father how the world goes on ! Off with your coat, and I’ll teach you.”

“ Father,” said Dan, with his milder nature trembling at the stern power in his father’s eyes, as the hearth-fire flashing up showed their stronger flash, “ you will never do such a thing, at my age and size ? ”

“ Won’t I ? ” answered Zebedee, cracking in the air the three knotted tails of the stout hempen twist ; “ as for your age, why it ought

to know better ; and as for your size—why the more room for this ! ”

It never came into Daniel’s head, that he should either resist or run away. But into his heart came the deadly sense of disgrace at being flogged, even by his own father, at full age to have a wife and even children of his own.

“ Father,” he said, as he pulled off his coat, and red striped shirt, and showed his broad white back, “ if you do this thing, you will never set eyes on my face again ; so help me God.”

“ Don’t care if I don’t,” the captain shouted ; “ you was never son of mine, to be a runagate, and traitor. How old be you, Master Free and Frisky, to larn me how the world goes on ? ”

“ As if you didn’t know, father ! The fifteenth of last March, I was twenty years of age.”

“ Then one for each year of your life, my lad, and another to make a man of thee. This little tickler hath three tails ; seven threes is twenty one—comes just right.”

When his father had done with him, Dan went softly up the dark staircase of old ship-timber, and entering his own little room struck a light. He saw that his bed was turned down for him, by the loving hand of his mother, and that his favourite brother Solomon, the youngest of the Tugwell race, was sleeping sweetly in the opposite cot. Then he caught a side view of his

own poor back, in the little black-framed looking-glass, and was quite amazed ; for he had not felt much pain, neither flinched, nor winced, nor spoken. In a moment, self-pity did more than pain, indignation, outrage, or shame could do ; it brought large tears into his softened eyes, and a long sob into his swelling throat.

He had borne himself like a man, when flogged, but now he behaved in the manner of a boy. "He shall never hear the last of this job," he muttered, "as long as mother has a tongue in her head." To this end, he filled a wet sponge with the red proofs of his scourging, laid it where it must be seen, and beside it a leaf torn from his wage-book, on which he had written with a trembling hand—"He says that I am no son of his, and this looks like it. Signed, Daniel Tugwell, or whatever my name ought to be."

Then he washed and dressed with neat's-foot oil all of his wounds that he could reach, and tied a band of linen over them, and, in spite of increasing smarts and pangs, dressed himself carefully in his Sunday clothes. From time to time, he listened for his father's step ; inasmuch as there was no bolt to his door, and to burn a light so late was against all law. But nobody came to disturb him ; his mother at the end of the passage slept heavily, and his two child-

sisters in the room close by, Tabby and Debby, were in the land of dreams, as far gone as little Solly was. Having turned out his tools from their flat flag-basket, or at least all but three or four favourites, he filled it with other clothes likely to be needed, and buckled it over his hatchet-head. Then the beating of his heart was like a flail inside a barn, as he stole along silently for one terrible good-bye.

This was to his darling pet of all pets, Debby, who worshipped this brother a great deal more than she worshipped her heavenly Father; because, as she said to her mother, when rebuked—"I can see Dan, mother, but I can't see Him. Can I sit in His lap, mother, and look in His face, and be told pretty stories, and eat apples all the time?" Tabby was of different grain, and her deity was Tim; for she was of the Tom-boy kind, and had no imagination. But Debby was enough to make a sound and seasoned heart to ache, as she lay in her little bed, with the flush of sleep deepening the delicate tint of her cheeks, shedding bright innocence fresh from heaven, on the tranquil droop of eyelid, and the smiling curve of lip. Her hair lay fluttered, as if by play with the angels that protected her; and if she could not see her heavenly Father, it was not because she was out of His sight.

A better tear than was ever shed by self-pity,

or any other selfishness, ran down the cheek she had kissed so often, and fell upon her coaxing, nestling neck. Then Dan, with his candle behind the curtain, set a long light kiss upon the forehead of his darling, and with a heart so full, and yet so empty, took one more gaze at her, and then was gone. With the basket in his hand, he dropped softly from his window upon the pile of seaweed at the back of the house—collected to make the walls wholesome—and then, caring little what his course might be, was led perhaps by the force of habit down the footpath towards the beach. So late at night, it was not likely that any one would disturb him there, and no one in the cottage which he had left would miss him before the morning. The end of October now was near, the nights were long, and he need not hurry. He might even lie down in his favourite boat, the best of her size in Springhaven, the one he had built among the rabbits. There he could say good-bye to all that he had known and loved so long, and be off before dawn, to some place where he might earn his crust and think his thoughts.

CHAPTER V.

SORE TEMPTATION.

WHEN a man's spirit and heart are low, and the world seems turned against him, he had better stop both ears, than hearken the sound of the sad sea waves at night. Even if he can see their movement, with the moon behind them, drawing paths of rippled light, and boats (with white sails pluming shadow, or thin oars that dive for gems), and perhaps a merry crew with music, coming home not at all sea-sick—well, even so, in the summer sparkle, the long low fall of the waves is sad. But how much more on a winter night, when the moon is away below the sea, and weary waters roll unseen from a vast profundity of gloom, fall unreckoned, and are no more than a wistful moan, as man is!

The tide was at quarter-ebb, and a dismal haze lay thick on shore and sea. It was not enough to be called a fog, or even a mist, but quite enough to deaden the gray light, always flowing along the boundary of sky and sea. But over

the wet sand and the white frill of the gently gurgling waves, more of faint light, or rather perhaps less of heavy night, prevailed. But Dan had keen eyes, and was well accustomed to the tricks of darkness; and he came to take his leave for ever of the fishing-squadron, with a certainty of knowing all the five, as if by daylight—for now there were only five again.

As the tide withdrew, the fishing-smacks (which had scarcely earned their name of late) were compelled to make the best of the world, until the tide came back again. To judge by creakings, strainings, groanings, and even grindings of timber mill-stones [if there yet lives in Ireland the good-will for a loan to us], all these little craft were making dreadful hardship of the abandonment, which men and nature inflicted on them every thirteenth hour. But all things do make more noise at night, when they get the chance (perhaps in order to assert their own prerogative), and they seem to know that noise goes further, and assumes a higher character, when men have left off making it.

The poor young fisherman's back was getting very sore by this time, and he began to look about for the white side-streak, which he had painted along the water-line of that new boat, to distract the meddlesome gaze of rivals from the peculiar curve below, which even Admiral

Darling had not noticed, when he passed her on the beach. But Nelson would have spied it out in half a second, and known all about it in the other half. Dan knew that he should find a very fair berth there, with a roll or two of stuff to lay his back on, and a piece of tarpauling to draw over his legs. In the faint light that hovered from the breaking of the wavelets, he soon found his boat, and saw a tall man standing by her.

“Daniel,” said the tall man, without moving, “my sight is very bad at night, but unless it is worse than usual, you are my admired friend, Daniel. A young man in a thousand—one who dares to think !”

“Yes, Squire Carne ;” the admired friend replied, with a touch of hat protesting against any claim to friendship ; “Dan Tugwell, at your service. And I have thought too much, and been paid out for it.”

“You see me in a melancholy attitude, and among melancholy surroundings ;” Caryl Carne offered his hand, as he spoke, and Dan took it with great reverence. “The truth is, that anger at a gross injustice, which has just come to my knowledge, drove me from my books, and sad family papers, in the room beneath the roof of our good Widow Shanks. And I needs must come down here, to think beside the sea, which

seems to be the only free thing in England. But I little expected to see you."

"And I little expected to be here, Squire Carne. But if not making too bold to ask—was it anybody that was beaten?"

"Beaten is not the right word for it, Dan ; cruelly flogged and lashed, a dear young friend of mine has been, as fine a young fellow as ever lived—and now he has not got a sound place on his back. And why? Because he was poor, and dared to lift his eyes to a rich young lady."

"But he was not flogged by his own father?" asked Dan, deeply interested in this romance, and rubbing his back as the pain increased with sympathy.

"Not quite so bad as that," replied the other ; "such a thing would be impossible, even in England. No ; his father took his part, as any father in the world would do ; even if the great man, the young lady's father, should happen to be his own landlord."

A very black suspicion crossed the mind of Dan, for Carne possessed the art of suggesting vile suspicions—might Admiral Darling have discovered something, and requested Dan's father to correct him? It was certain that the Admiral, so kind of heart, would never have desired such severity ; but he might have told Captain Tugwell, with whom he had a talk almost every

time they met, that his eldest son wanted a little discipline ; and the Club might have served as a pretext for this, when the true crime must not be declared, by reason of its enormity. Dan closed his teeth, and English air grew bitter in his mouth, as this belief ran through him.

“Good night, my young friend, I am beginning to recover ;” Carne continued briskly, for he knew that a nail snaps in good oak, when the hammer falls too heavily ; “what is a little bit of outrage, after all ? When I have been in England a few years more, I shall laugh at myself for having loved fair play and self-respect, in this innocent young freshness. We must wag as the world does ; and you know the proverb—What makes the world wag, but the weight of the bag ?”

“But if you were more in earnest, sir—or at least—I mean, if you were not bound here by property and business, and an ancient family, and things you could not get away from, and if you wanted only to be allowed fair play, and treated as a man by other men, and be able to keep your own money when you earned it, or at least to buy your own victuals with it—what would you try to do, or what part of the country would you think best to go to ?”

“Dan, you must belong to a very clever family. It is useless to shake your head—you

must ; or you never could put such questions, so impossible to answer. In all this blessed island, there is no spot yet discovered, where such absurd visions can be realised. Nay, nay, my romantic friend ; be content with more than the average blessings of this land. You are not starved, you are not imprisoned, you are not even beaten ; and if you are not allowed to think, what harm of that ? If you thought all day, you would never dare to act upon your thoughts ; and so you are better without them. Tush, an Englishman was never born for freedom. Good night.”

“ But sir, Squire Carne,” cried Dan pursuing him, “ there is one thing which you do not seem to know. I am driven away from this place to-night ; and it would have been so kind of you to advise me where to go to.”

“ Driven away ! ” exclaimed Carne with amazement. “ The pride of the village driven out of it ! You may be driving yourself away, Tugwell, through some scrape, or love-affair ; but when that blows over you will soon come back. What would Springhaven do without you ? And your dear good father would never let you go.”

“ I am not the pride, but the shame of the village.” Dan forgot all his home-pride at last. “ And my dear good father is the man who has

done it. He has leathered me worse than the gentleman you spoke of, and without half so much to be said against me. For nothing but going to the Club to-night, where I am sure we drank King George's health, my father has lashed me so, that I am ashamed to tell it. And I am sure that I never meant to tell it, until your kindness, in a way of speaking, almost drove it out of me."

"Daniel Tugwell," Carne answered with solemnity, "this is beyond belief, even in England. You must have fallen asleep, Dan, in the middle of large thoughts, and dreamed this great impossibility."

"My back knows whether it has been a dream, sir. I never heard of dreams as left one-and-twenty lines behind them. But whether it be one, or whether it be twenty, makes no odds of value. The disgrace it is that drives me out."

"Is there no way of healing this sad breach?" Carne asked in a tone of deep compassion; "if your father could be brought to beg your pardon, or even to say that he was sorry——"

"He, sir! If such a thing was put before him, his answer would be just to do it again, if I were fool enough to go near him. You are too mild of nature, sir, to understand what father is."

"It is indeed horrible, too horrible to think of"—the voice of this kind gentleman betrayed

that he was shuddering. “If a Frenchman did such a thing, he would be torn to pieces. But no French father would ever dream of such atrocity. He would rather flog himself within an inch of his own life.”

“Are they so much better, then, and kinder than us Englishmen?” In spite of all his pain and grief, Dan could not help smiling at the thought of his father rope’s-ending himself. “So superior to us, sir, in every way?”

“In almost every way, I am sorry to confess. I fear indeed, in every way, except bodily strength, and obstinate ignorant endurance, mis-called ‘courage,’ and those rough qualities—whatever they may be—which seem needful for the making of a seaman. But in good manners, justice, the sense of what is due from one man to another, in dignity, equality, temperance, benevolence, largeness of feeling, and quickness of mind, and above all in love of freedom, they are very, very sadly far beyond us. And indeed I have been led to think from some of your finer perceptions, Dan, that you must have a share of French blood in your veins.”

“Me, sir!” cried Dan, jumping back, in a style which showed the distance between faith and argument; no, sir, thank God there was never none of that; but all English, with some of the Romans, who was pretty near equal to

us, from what I hear. I suppose, Squire Carne, you thought that low of me, because I made a fuss about being larruped; the same as a Frenchman I pulled out of the water did about my doing of it, as if I could have helped it. No Englishman would have said much about that; but they seem to make more fuss than we do. And I dare say it was Frenchlike of me, to go on about my hiding."

"Daniel," answered Caryl Carne, in alarm at this British sentiment; "as a man of self-respect, you have only one course left, if your father refuses to apologise. You must cast off his tyranny; you must prove yourself a man; you must begin life upon your own account. No more of this drudgery, and slavery for others, who allow you no rights in return. But a nobler employment among free people, with a chance of asserting your courage and manhood, and a certainty that no man will think you his bond-slave, because you were born upon his land, or in his house. My father behaved to me —well, it does not matter. He might have repented of it, if he had lived longer; and I feel ashamed to speak of it, after such a case as yours. But behold, how greatly it has been for my advantage! Without that, I might now have been a true and simple Englishman!"

Carne (who had taken most kindly to the

fortune which made him an untrue Englishman) clapped his breast with both hands ; not proudly, as a Frenchman does, nor yet with that abashment and contempt of demonstration, which make a true Briton very clumsy in such doings. While Daniel Tugwell, being very solid, and by no means ‘emotional,’—as people call it nowadays—was looking at him, to the utmost of his power (which would have been greater by daylight), with gratitude, and wonder, and consideration, and some hesitation about his foreign sentiments.

“Well, sir,” said Dan, with the usual impulse of the British workman, “is there any sort of work as you could find for me, to earn my own living, and be able to think afterwards ?”

“There is work of a noble kind, such as any man of high nature may be proud to share in, to which it is possible that I might get an entrance for you, if there should be a vacancy. Work of high character, such as admits of no higgling and haggling, and splitting of half-pence, but an independent feeling, and a sense of advancing the liberty of mankind, without risking a penny, but putting many guineas into one’s own pocket, and so becoming fitted for a loftier line of life.”

“Is it smuggling, sir ?” Daniel asked with sore misgivings, for he had been brought up to

be very shy of that. “Many folk consider that quite honest; but father calls it roguery—though I never shall hear any more of his opinions now.”

“Sigh not, friend Daniel; sigh not so heavily at your own emancipation;” Carne never could resist the chance of a little bit of sarcasm, though it often injured his own plots. “Smuggling is a very fine pursuit, no doubt, but petty in comparison with large affairs like ours. No, Dan Tugwell, I am not a smuggler, but a high politician, and a polisher of mankind. How soon do you think of leaving this outrageous hole?”

Despite the stupid outrage upon himself, Dan was too loyal and generous of nature to be pleased with this description of his native place. But Carne, too quick of temper for a really fine intriguer, cut short his expostulations.

“Call it what you please,” he said; “only make your mind up quickly. If you wish to remain here, do so; a man of no spirit is useless to me. But if you resolve to push your fortunes among brave and lofty comrades, stirring scenes, and brisk adventures, meet me at six to-morrow evening, at the place where you chopped down my rails. All you want will be provided, and your course of promotion begins at once. But remember, all must be honour bright. No shilly-shallying, no lukewarmness, no indifference to a noble cause. Faint heart never won fair lady.”

The waning moon had risen, and now shone upon Carne's face, lighting up all its gloomy beauty, and strange depth of sadness. Dan seemed to lose his clear keen sight, beneath the dark influence of the other's gaze; and his will, although not feeble, dropped before a stronger power. "He knows all about me and Miss Dolly," said the poor young fisherman to himself; "I thought so before, and I am certain of it now. And for some reason, beyond my knowledge, he wishes to encourage it. Oh, perhaps because the Carnes have always been against the Darlings! I never thought of that before."

This was a bitter reflection to him, and might have inclined him the right way, if time had allowed him to work it out. But no such time was afforded; and in the confusion and gratitude of the moment, he answered, "Sir, I shall be always at your service, and do my very best in every way to please you." Caryl Carne smiled; and the Church-clock of Springhaven solemnly struck midnight.

CHAPTER VI.

THE TRIALS OF FAITH.

THE following day, the 27th of October, was a dark one in the calendar of a fair and good young lady. Two years would then have passed, since Faith Darling, at the age of twenty, had received sad tidings, which would make the rest of her life flow on in shadow. So at least she thought, forgetful (or rather perhaps unconscious, for she had not yet learned the facts of life) that time and the tide of years submerge the loftiest youthful sorrow. To a warm and steadfast heart like hers, and a nature strong but self-controlled, no casual change, or light diversion, or sudden interest in other matters could take the place of the motive lost. Therefore, being of a deep true faith, and staunch in the belief of a great God, good to all who seek his goodness, she never went away from what she meant, that faith and hope should feed each other.

This saved her from being a trouble to any one, or damping anybody's cheerfulness, or

diminishing the gaiety around her. She took a lively interest in the affairs of other people, which a “blighted being” declines to do; and their pleasures ministered to her own good cheer, without, or at any rate beyond, her knowledge. Therefore she was liked by everybody, and beloved by all who had any heart for a brave and pitiful story. Thus a sweet flower, half-closed by the storm, continues to breathe forth its sweetness.

However there were times, when even Faith was lost in sad remembrance, and her bright young spirit became depressed by the hope deferred that maketh sick the heart. As time grew longer, hope grew less; and even the cheerful Admiral, well versed in perils of the deep, and acquainted with many a wandering story, had made up his mind that Erle Twemlow was dead and would never more be heard of. The rector also, the young man’s father, could hold out no longer against that conclusion, and even the mother disdaining the mention, yet understood the meaning, of despair. And so among those to whom the subject was the most interesting in the world, it was now the strict rule to avoid it with the lips, though the eyes were often filled with it.

Faith Darling at first scorned this hard law. “It does seem so unkind”—she used to say—

“that even his name should be interdicted, as if he had disgraced himself. If he is dead, he has died with honour. None who ever saw him can doubt that. But he is not dead. He will come back to us, perhaps next week, perhaps tomorrow, perhaps even while we are afraid to speak of him. If it is for my sake that you behave thus, I am not quite so weak as to require it.”

The peculiar circumstances of the case had not only baffled enquiry, but from the very beginning precluded it. The man with the keenest eyes, sharpest nose, biggest ears, and longest head, of all the many sneaks who now conduct what they call “special enquiries,” could have done nothing with a case like this, because there was no beginning it. Even now, in fair peace, and with large knowledge added, the matter would not have been easy; but in war universal, and blank ignorance, there was nothing to be done, but to sit down and think. And the story invited a good deal of thinking, because of its disappointing turn.

During the negotiations for peace in 1801, and before any articles were signed, orders were sent to the Cape of Good Hope for the return of a regiment of the line, which had not been more than three months there. But the Cape was likely to be restored to Holland, and two empty

transports returning from India were to call under convoy, and bring home these troops. One of the officers was Captain Erle Twemlow, then about twenty-five years of age, and under probation, by the Admiral's decree, for the hand of the maiden whose heart had been his from a time to itself immemorial. After tiresome days of impatience, the transports arrived under conduct of a frigate; and after another week, the soldiers embarked with fine readiness for their native land.

But before they had cleared the Bay, they met a brig-of-war direct from Portsmouth, carrying despatches for the officer in command of the troops, as well as for the captain of the frigate. Some barbarous tribes on the coast of Guinea, the part that is called the Ivory coast, had plundered and burnt a British trading-station within a few leagues of Cape Palmas, and had killed and devoured the traders. These natives must be punished, and a stern example made, and a negro monarch, of the name of Hunko Jum, must have his palace burned, if he possessed one; while his rival, the king of the Crumbo tribe, (whose name was Bandeliah, who had striven to protect the traders) must be rewarded, and have a treaty made with him, if he could be brought to understand it. Both sailors and soldiers were ready enough to undertake this

little spree, as they called it, expecting to have a pleasant run ashore, a fine bit of sport with the negroes, and perhaps a few nose-rings of gold to take home to their wives, and sweethearts.

But alas, the reality was not so fine. The negroes who had done all the mischief made off, carrying most of their houses with them, and the palace of Hunko Jum, if he possessed one, was always a little way further on. The Colonel was a stubborn man, and so was the sea-captain—good Tories both, and not desirous to skulk out of scrapes, and leave better men to pick up their clumsy breakages. Blue and red vied with one another to scour the country, and punish the natives—if only they could catch them—and to vindicate, with much strong language, the dignity of Great Britain, and to make an eternal example.

But white bones are what the white man makes, under that slimy sunshine and putrefying moon. Weary, slack-jointed, low-hearted as they were, the deadly Coast-fever fell upon them, and they shivered, and burned, and groaned, and raved, and leaped into holes, or rolled into camp-fires. The Colonel died early, and the Naval Captain followed him; none stood upon the order of their going; but man followed man, as in a funeral, to the grave, until there was no grave to go to. The hand of the Lord was stretched out against them; and never would

one have come back to England, out of more than five hundred who landed, except for the manhood and vigour of a seaman, Captain Southcombe, of the transport *Gwalior*.

This brave and sensible man had been left with his ship lying off to be signalled for, in case of mishap, while his consort and the frigate were despatched in advance to a creek, about twenty leagues westward, where the land-force triumphant was to join them. Captain Southcombe with every hand he could muster traced the unfortunate party inland, and found them led many leagues in the wrong direction, lost among quagmires breathing death, worn out with vermin, venom, and despair, and hemmed in by savages lurking for the night, to rush in upon and make an end of them. What need of many words? This man, and his comrades, did more than any other men on the face of this earth could have done without British blood in them. They buried the many who had died without hope of the decent concealment which our life has had, and therefore our death longs for; they took on their shoulders, or on cane-wattles, the many who had made up their minds to die, and were in much doubt about having done it, and they roused up and worked up by the scruff of their loose places the few who could get along on their own legs. And so, with great

spirit, and still greater patience, they managed to save quite as many as deserved it.

Because, when they came within signal of the *Gwalior*, Captain Southcombe, marching slowly with his long limp burdens, found ready on the sand the little barrel, about as big as a kilderkin, of true and unsullied Stockholm pitch, which he had taken, as his brother took Madeira, for ripeness and for betterance, by right of change of climate. With a little of this given choicely and carefully at the back of every sick man's tongue, and a little more spread across the hollow of his stomach, he found them so enabled in the afternoon, that they were glad to sit up in the bottom of a boat, and resign themselves to an All-wise Providence.

Many survived, and blest Captain Southcombe, not at first cordially—for the man yet remains to be discovered who is grateful to his doctor—but gradually more and more, and with that healthy action of the human bosom which is called expectoration, whenever grateful memories were rekindled by the smell of tar. But this is a trifle; many useful lives were saved, and the Nation should have thanked Captain Southcombe, but did not.

After these sad incidents, when sorrow for old friends was tempered by the friendly warmth afforded by their shoes, a muster was held by the

Major in command, and there was only one officer who could neither assert himself alive, nor be certified as dead. That one was Erle Twemlow, and the regiment would rather have lost any other two officers. Urgent as it was for the safety of the rest, to fly with every feather from this pestilential coast, sails were handed, boats despatched, and dealings tried with Hunko Jum, who had reappeared with promptitude, the moment he was not wanted. From this noble monarch, and his chiefs, and all his nation, it was hard to get any clear intelligence, because their own was absorbed in absorbing. They had found upon the sands a cask of Admiralty rum, as well as a stout residue of unadulterated pitch. Noses, and tongues, and historical romance—for a cask had been washed ashore five generations since, and set up for a god, when the last drop was licked—induced this brave nation to begin upon the rum ; and fashion (as powerful with them as with us) compelled them to drink the tar likewise, because they had seen the white men doing it. This would have made it hard to understand them, even if they had been English scholars, which their ignorance of rum proved them not to be ; and our sailors very nearly went their way, after sadly ascertaining nothing, except that the cask was empty.

But luckily, just as they were pushing off,

a very large, black head appeared from behind a vegetable-ivory tree, less than a quarter of a mile away, and they knew that this belonged to Bandeliah, the revered king of the Crumbos, who had evidently smelled rum far inland. With him they were enabled to hold discourse, partly by signs, and partly by means of an old and highly polished negro, who had been the rat-catcher at the factory now consumed; and the conclusion, or perhaps the confusion, arrived at from signs, grunts, grins, nods, waggings of fingers and twistings of toes, translated grandiloquently into broken English, was not far from being to the following effect.

To wit, that two great kings reigned inland, either of them able to eat up Hunko Jum and Bandeliah at a mouthful, but both of them too proud to set foot upon land that was flat, or in water that was salt. They ruled over two great nations called the Houlas, and the Quackwas, going out of sight among great rivers and lands with clear water standing over them. And if the white men could not understand this, it was because they drank salt water.

Moreover, they said that of these two kings, the king of the Houlas was a woman, the most beautiful ever seen in all the world, and able to jump over any man's head. But the king of the Quackwas was a man, and although he had

more than two thousand wives, and was taller by a joint of a bamboo than Bandeliah—whose stature was at least six feet four—yet nothing would be of any use to him, unless he could come to an agreement with Mabonga, the queen of the Houlas, to split a Durra straw with him. But Mabonga was coy, and understanding men, as well as jumping over them, would grant them no other favour than the acceptance of their presents. However, the other great king was determined to have her for his wife, if he abolished all the rest, and for this reason he had caught and kept the lost Englishman as a medicine-man; and it was not likely that he would kill him, until he failed or succeeded.

To further enquiries Bandeliah answered that to rescue the prisoner was impossible. If it had been his own newest wife, he would not push out a toe for her. The great king Golo lived up in high places that overlooked the ground, as he would these white men, and his armies went like wind and spread like fire. None of his warriors ate white man's flesh; they were afraid it would make them cowardly.

A brave heart is generally tender in the middle, to make up for being so firm outside, even as the Durian fruit is. Captain Southcombe had walked the poop-deck of the *Gwalior* many a time, in the cool of the night, with Erle

Twemlow for his companion, and had taken a very warm liking to him. So that when the survivors of the regiment were landed at Portsmouth, this brave sailor travelled at his own cost to Springhaven, and told the rector the whole sad story, making it clear to him beyond all doubt, that nothing whatever could be done to rescue the poor young man from those savages, or even to ascertain his fate. For the Quackwas were an inland tribe, inhabiting vast regions wholly unknown to any European, and believed to extend to some mighty rivers, and lakes resembling inland seas.

Therefore Mr. Twemlow, in a deep quiet voice asked Captain Southcombe one question only—whether he might keep any hope of ever having, by the mercy of the Lord, his only son restored to him. And the sailor said—yes, the mistake would be ever to abandon such a hope, for at the moment he least expected it, his son might stand before him. He pretended to no experience of the western coast of Africa, and niggers he knew were a very queer lot, acting according to their own lights, which differed according to their natures. But he was free to say, that in such a condition he never would think of despairing, though it might become very hard not to do so, as time went on without bringing any news. He himself had been in

sad peril more than once, and once it appeared quite hopeless ; but he thought of his wife and his children at home, and the Lord had been pleased to deliver him.

The parson was rebuked by this brave man's faith, who made no pretence whatever to piety ; and when they said Good-bye their eyes were bright with the good will and pity of the human race ; who know trouble not as yet inflicted upon monkeys. Mr. Twemlow's heart fell, when the sailor was gone, quite as if he had lost his own mainstay ; but he braced himself up to the heavy duty of imparting sad news to his wife and daughter, and worst of all to Faith Darling. But the latter surprised him by the way in which she bore it ; for while she made no pretence to hide her tears, she was speaking as if they were needless. And the strangest thing of all, in Mr. Twemlow's opinion, was her curious persistence about Queen Mabonga. Could any black woman—and she supposed she must be that—be considered by white people to be beautiful ? Had Captain Southcombe ever even seen her ; and if not, how could he be in such raptures about her attractions ? She did not like to say a word, because he had been so kind and so faithful to those poor soldiers, whom it was his duty to bring home safe ; but if it had not been for that, she might have thought that with so

many children and a wife at Limehouse, he should not have allowed his mind to dwell so fondly on the personal appearance of a negress!

The rector was astonished at this injustice, and began to revise his opinion about Faith as the fairest and sweetest girl in all the world; but Mrs. Twemlow smiled, when she had left off crying, and said that she liked the dear child all the better for concluding that Ponga—or whatever her name was—must of necessity and at the first glance fall desperately in love with her own Erle. Then the rector cried “Oh, to be sure, that explained it! But he never could have thought of that, without his wife’s assistance.”

Two years now, two years of quiet patience, of busy cheerfulness now and then, and of kindness to others always, had made of Faith Darling a lady to be loved for a hundred years, and for ever. The sense of her sorrow was never far from her, yet never brought near to any other by herself; and her smile was as warm, and her eyes as bright, as if there had never been a shadow on her youth. To be greeted by her, and to receive her hand, and one sweet glance of her large good will, was enough to make an old man feel that he must have been good at some time, and a young man hope that he should be so by-and-by; though the tendency was generally contented with the hope.

CHAPTER VII.

FAREWELL DANIEL.

THOUGHTFUL for others, as she always was, this lovely and lovable young woman went alone, on the morning of the day that was so sorrowful for her, to bear a little share of an elder lady's sorrow, and comfort her with hopes, or at any rate with kindness. They had shed tears together, when the bad news arrived, and again when a twelvemonth had weakened feeble hope ; and now that another year had well-nigh killed it in old hearts too conversant with the cruelties of the world, a little talk, a tender look, a gentle repetition of things that had been said at least a hundred times before, might enter by some subtle passage to the cells of comfort. Who knows how the welted vine-leaf, when we give it shade and moisture, crisps its curves again, and breathes new bloom upon its veinage ? And who can tell how the flagging heart, beneath the cool mantle of time, revives, shapes itself

into keen sympathies again, and spreads itself congenially to the altered light?

Without thinking about it, but only desiring to do a little good, if possible, Faith took the private way through her father's grounds, leading to the rectory eastward of the village. It was scarcely two o'clock, and the sun was shining, and the air clear and happy, as it can be in October. She was walking rather fast, for fear of dropping into the brooding vein, when in the little fir-plantation a man came forth on her path, and stood within a few yards in front of her. She was startled for an instant, because the place was lonely, and Captain Stubbard's battery-crew had established their power to repulse the French by pounding their fellow-countrymen. But presently she saw that it was Dan Tugwell, looking as unlike himself as any man can do (without the aid of an artist), and with some surprise she went on to meet him.

Instead of looking bright, and bold, and fearless, with the freedom of the sea in his open face, and that of the sun in his clustering curls, young Daniel appeared care-worn and battered, not only unlike his proper self, but afraid of and ashamed of it. He stood not firmly on the ground, nor lightly poised like a gallant sailor, but loosely and clumsily like a ploughman, who leaves off at the end of his furrow to ease the

cramp. His hat looked as if he had slept in it, and his eyes as if he had not slept with them.

Miss Darling had always been fond of Dan, from the days when they played on the beach together, in childhood's contempt of social law. Her old nurse used to shut her eyes, after looking round to make sure that there was "nobody coming to tell on them," while as pretty a pair of children as the benevolent sea ever prattled with were making mirth and music and romance along its margin. And though in ripe boyhood the unfaithful Daniel transferred the hot part of his homage to the more coquettish Dolly, Faith had not made any grievance of that, but rather thought all the more of him, especially when he saved her sister's life in a very rash boating adventure.

So now she went up to him with a friendly mind, and asked him softly and pitifully what trouble had fallen upon him. At the sweet sound of her voice, and the bright encouragement of her eyes, he felt as if he was getting better.

"If you please, Miss," he said, with a meek salutation, which proved his panisic ideas to be not properly wrought into his system as yet, "if you please, Miss, things are very hard upon me."

"Is it money?" she asked, with the true British instinct that all common woes have their

origin there ; "if it is, I shall be so glad that I happen to have a good bit put by, just now."

But Dan shook his head with such dignified sadness, that Faith was quite afraid of having hurt his feelings. "Oh I might have known," she said, "that it was nothing of that kind. You are always so industrious and steady. But what can it be? Is it anything about Captain Stubbard and his men, because I know you do not like them, and none of the old Springhaven people seem to do so? Have you been obliged to fight with any of them, Daniel?"

"No, Miss, no. I would not soil my hand by laying it on any of such chaps as those. Unless they should go for to insult me, I mean, or any one belonging to me. No, Miss, no. It is ten times worse than money, or assault and battery."

"Well, Daniel, I would not on any account," said Faith, with her desire of knowledge growing hotter by delay, as a kettle boils by waiting ; "on no account would I desire to know anything that you do not seem to think my advice might help you to get out of. I am not in a hurry ; but still my time is getting rather late for what I have to do. By the time I come back from the rectory, perhaps you will have made up your mind about it. Till then, good-bye to you, Daniel."

He stepped out of the path, that she might go by, and only said—"Then Good-bye, Miss; I shall be far away, when you come back."

This was more than the best-regulated or largest—which generally is the worst-regulated—feminine mind could put up with. Miss Darling came back, with her mind made up to learn all, or to know the reason why.

"Dan, this is unworthy of you," she said, with her sweet voice full of sorrow. "Have I ever been hard or unkind to you, Dan, that you should be so afraid of me?"

"No, Miss, never. But too much the other way. That makes it so bad for me to say Good-bye. I am going away, Miss. I must be off this evening. I never shall see Springhaven no more, nor you, Miss—nor nobody else."

"It is quite impossible, Dan. You must be dreaming. You don't look at all like yourself, to-day. You have been doing too much overtime. I have heard all about it, and how very hard you work. I have been quite sorry for you on Sundays, to see you in the gallery, without a bit of rest, still obliged to give the time with your elbow. I have often been astonished that your mother could allow it. Why, Dan, if you go away, you will break her heart, and I don't know how many more in Springhaven."

"No, Miss, no. They very soon mends them.

It is the one as goes away that gets a deal the worst of it. I am sure I don't know whatever I shall do, without the old work to attend to. But it will get on just as well, without me."

"No, it won't," replied Faith, looking at him very sadly, and shaking her head at such cynical views; "nothing will be the same, when you are gone, Daniel; and you ought to have more consideration."

"I am going with a good man, at any rate," he answered, "the freest-minded gentleman that ever came to these parts. Squire Carne, of Carne Castle, if you please, Miss."

"Mr. Caryl Carne!" cried Faith, in a tone which made Daniel look at her with some surprise. "Is he going away? Oh I am so glad!"

"No, Miss; not Squire Carne himself. Only to provide for me work far away, and not to be beholden any more to my own people. And work where a man may earn and keep his own money, and hold up his head while adoing of it."

"Oh, Dan, you know more of such things than I do. And every man has a right to be independent, and ought to be so, and I should despise him otherwise. But don't be driven by it into the opposite extreme of disliking the people in a different rank——"

"No, Miss, there is no fear of that—the only fear is liking some of them too much."

“And then,” continued Faith, who was now upon one of her favourite subjects past interruption, “you must try to remember that if you work hard, so do we, or nearly all of us. From the time my father gets up in the morning, to the time when he goes to bed at night, he has not got five minutes—as he tells us every day—for attending to anything but business. Even at dinner, when you get a good hour, and won’t be disturbed—now will you?”

“No, Miss; not if all the work was tumbling down. No workman as respects himself would take fifty-nine minutes for sixty.”

“Exactly so; and you are right. You stand up for your rights. Your dinner you have earned, and you will have it. And the same with your breakfast, and your supper too, and a good long night to get over it. Do you jump up in bed, before you have shut both eyes, hearing or fancying you have heard the bell, that calls you out into the cold, and the dark, and a wet saddle, from a warm pillow? And putting that by, as a trouble of the war, and the chance of being shot at by dark tall men”—here Faith shuddered at her own presentment, as the image of Caryl Carne passed before her—“have you to consider, at every turn, that whatever you do—though you mean it for the best—will be twisted and turned against you by some one, and made into

wickedness that you never dreamed of, by envious people, whose grudge against you is that they fancy you look down on them? Though I am sure of one thing, and that is that my father, instead of looking down upon any honest man because he is poor, looks up to him; and so do I; and so does every gentleman, or lady. And any one who goes about to persuade the working-people—as they are called, because they have to use their hands more—that people like my father look down upon them, and treat them like dogs, and all those wicked stories—all I can say is, any man who does it deserves to be put in the stocks, or the pillory, or even to be transported as an enemy to his country."

Dan looked at the lady with great surprise. He had always known her to be kind and gentle, and what the old people called "mannersome," to every living body that came near her. But to hear her put, better than he could put them, his own budding sentiments (which he thought to be new, with the timeworn illusion of young Liberals), and to know from her bright cheeks, and brighter eyes, that her heart was in every word of it, and to feel himself rebuked for the evil he had thought, and the mischief he had given ear to—all this was enough to make him angry with himself, and uncertain how to answer.

“I am certain that you never thought of such things:” Miss Darling continued, with her gentle smile returning; “you are much too industrious and sensible for that. But I hear that some persons are now in our parish, who make it their business, for some reason of their own, to spread ill-will and jealousy and hatred everywhere, to make us all strangers and foes to one another, and foreigners to our own Country. We have enemies enough, by the will of the Lord (as Mr. Twemlow says), for a sharp trial to us, and a lesson to our pride, and a deep source of gratitude, and charity, and good-will—though I scarcely understand how they come in—and above all, a warning to us to stick together, and not exactly hate, but still abhor everybody who has a word to say against his own Country, at a time like this. And ten thousand times as much, if he is afraid to say it, but crawls with crafty poison into simple English bosoms.”

“There is nothing of that, Miss, to my knowledge here,” the young fisherman answered simply; “Springhaven would never stand none of that; and the Club drinks the health of King George, every night of their meeting, and stamps on the floor for him. But I never shall help to do that any more. I must be going, Miss—and thank you.”

“Then you will not tell me why you go. You speak of it, as if it was against your will, and yet refuse to say what drives you? Have you been poaching, Dan? Ah, that is it! But I can beg you off immediately. My father is very good even to strangers, and as for his doing anything to you—have no fear, Dan, you shall not be charged with it, even if you have been in Brown Bushes.”

Brown Bushes, a copse about a mile inland, was the Admiral’s most sacred spot, when peace allowed him to go shooting, because it was beloved by woodcocks, his favourite birds both for trigger and for fork. But Daniel only shook his head; he had not been near Brown Bushes. Few things perhaps will endure more wear than feminine curiosity. But when a trap has been set too long, it gets tongue-bound, and grows content without contents.

“Daniel Tugwell,” said Miss Darling severely, “if you have not been fighting, or conspiring against society, or even poaching, I can well understand that you may have reasons for not desiring my assistance or advice. And I only wonder that under such circumstances you took the trouble to wait for me here, as you appear to have done. Good-bye.”

“Oh, don’t be cross, Miss! please not to be cross;” cried Daniel, running after her; “I

would tell you all about it this very instant moment, if it were behooving to me. You will hear all about it, when you get to Parson Twemlow's, for I saw mother going there, afore she had her breakfast, though I was not concernable to let her see me. If the Squire had been home, she would have gone up to Hall first. No, Miss, no. I done nothing to be ashamed of; and if you turn back on me, you'll be sorry afterwards."

Faith was quicker to think that she had been too sharp, than to be so in behaviour to any one. She began at once, with a blush for her bad ideas, to beg Dan's pardon; and he saw his way to say what he was come to say.

" You always were too good, Miss Faith, too good to be hard upon any one; and I am sure you have not been hard upon me; for I know that I look disrespectable. But I couldn't find words to say what I wanted, until you spoke so soft and kind. And perhaps, when I say it, you'll be angry with me, and think that I trespass upon you."

" No, I won't, Dan. I will promise you that. You may tell me, as if I were Mr. Swipes, who says that he never lost his temper in his life, because he is always right, and other people wrong."

" Well, Miss, I'm afraid that I am not like

that, and that makes me feel so uncomfortable with the difference between us. Because it is all about Miss Dolly, and I might seem so impudent. But you know that I would go through fire and water to serve Miss Dolly ; and I durstn't go away for ever, without one message to her. If I was in her own rank of life, God Almighty alone should part us, whether I was rich or whether I was poor, and I'd like to see any one come near her ! But being only an ignorant fellow without any birth or book-learning, I am not such a fool as to forget that the breadth of the world lies between us. Only I may wish her well, all the same ; I may wish her well and happy, Miss ? ”

“ Certainly you may.” Faith blushed at the passion of his words, and sighed at their despair. “ You have saved her life. She respects and likes you, the same as my father and I do. You may trust me with your message, Dan.”

“ I suppose it would not be the proper thing for me to see her once before I go ; just for one minute, with you standing by her, that I might —that she might——”

“ No,” answered Faith, though it grieved her to say it ; “ we must not think of that, Dan. It could do you no good, and it might do her harm. But if you have any message, to be useful to her——”

“ The useful part of it must be through you, Miss, and not sent to her at all, I think, or it would be very impertinent. The kind part is to give her my good-bye, and say that I would die to help her. And the useful part is for yourself. For God’s sake, Miss, do keep Miss Dolly out of the way of Squire Carne! He hath a tongue equal to any woman, with the mind of a man beneath it. He hath gotten me body and soul; because I care not the skin of a dab what befalls me. But oh, Miss, he never must get Miss Dolly. He may be a very good man in some ways, and he is wonderful free-minded; but any young lady as marries him, had better have leaped into the Culver Hole. Farewell, Miss, now that I have told you.”

He was gone before Faith could even offer him her hand, but he took off his hat and put one finger to his curls, as he looked back from the clearing; and her eyes filled with tears, as she waved her hand, and answered—“ Farewell, Daniel!”

CHAPTER VIII.

CAULIFLOWERS.

“THEY cocks and hens,” Mr. Swipes used to say in the earlier days of his empire, “bless you, my lord, they cocks and hens knows a good bit of gardening as well as I do. They calls one another, and they comes to see it, and they puts their heads to one side and talks about it, and they say to one another—‘must be something good there, or he wouldn’t have made it so bootiful ;’ and then up go their combs, and they tear away into it, like a passel of Scotchmen at a scratching-match. If your lordship won’t put a lock on the door, you will never taste a bit of good vegetable.”

Admiral Darling was at length persuaded to allow Mr. Swipes the privilege of locking himself in the kitchen-garden ; and then for the purpose of getting at him, a bell was put in the gable of the tool-house, with a long handle hanging outside the door in the courtyard towards the kitchen. Thus he was able to rest

from his labours, without incurring unjust reproach ; and gradually as he declined, with increasing decision, to answer the bell when it rang, according to the highest laws of nature it left off ringing altogether. So Mr. Swipes in the walled kitchen-garden sought peace and ensued it.

One quiet November afternoon, when the disappearance of Dan Tugwell had been talked out and done with, a sad mishap befell this gardener, during the performance—or to speak more correctly, the contemplation of his work. A yawn, of such length and breadth and height and profundity, took possession of him, that the space it had so well occupied still retained the tender memory. In plainer words, he had ricked his jaw ; not from general want of usage, but from the momentary excess.

“ Sarves me right,” he muttered, “ for carrying on so, without nothing inside of un’. Must go to doctor, quick step, and no mistake.”

In this strait, he set off for John Prater’s (for it was a matter of luck to get ale, at the Hall, and in such emergency he must not trust to fortune), and passing hastily through the door, left it unlocked behind him. Going down the hill, he remembered this, and had a great mind to go back again, but the unanimous demand of his system for beer impelled him downwards.

He never could get up that hill again, without hydraulic pressure.

All might have gone well, and all would have gone well, except for the grievous mistake of Nature in furnishing women with eyes whose keenness is only exceeded by that of their tongues. The cook at the Hall, a superior person—though lightly esteemed by Mrs. Cloam—had long been ambitious to have a voice in the selection of her raw material. If anything was good, who got the credit? Mr. Swipes immediately. But if everything was bad, as more often happened, who received the blame? Mary Knuckledown. Her lawful name was “Knuckle-up,” but early misfortunes had reduced her to such mildness, that her name became inverted—as she expressed it—in harmony with her nature. Facts having generally been adverse to her, she found some comfort in warm affection for their natural enemies, and ever-victorious rivals—words. Any words coming with a brave rush are able to scatter to the winds the strongest facts: but big words—as all our great orators know—knock them at once on the head and cremate them. But the cook was a kind-hearted woman, and liked both little and big words, without thinking of them.

She had put down her joint, a good aitch-bone, for roasting—than which, if well treated,

are few better treats—to revolve in the distant salute of the fire (until it should ripen for the close embrace, where the tints of gold and chestnut vie), when it came into her provident mind with a flash, that neither horse-radish nor cauliflower had yet been delivered by Mr. Swipes. She must run out and pull the long handle in the yard, and remind him gently of her needs, for she stood in some awe of his character, as a great annalist of little people's lives.

Leaving the small dog *Dandolo* with stern orders to keep the jack steadily going, with a stick on the dresser to intimidate one eye, and a sop in the dripping-pan to encourage the other, Mrs. Knuckledown ran into the courtyard, just in time to see the last swing of the skirt of that noble gardener's coat, as he turned the wall corner on his march towards the tap. She longed to call him back, but remembered just in time how fearfully cross that had made him once before, and she was yielding with a sigh to her usual bad luck, when an eager and triumphant cluck made her look about. The monarch and patriarch of cocks, a magnificent old Dorking, not idly endowed with five claws for the scratch, had discovered something great, and was calling all his wives, and even his sons, as many as yet crowded not against him, to share this special luck of fortune, or kind mood of Provi-

dence. In a minute or two he had levied an army, some half-hundred strong, and all spurning the land, to practise their liberal claws betimes for the gorgeous joy of scattering it. Then the grand old cock, whose name was "Bill," made them all fall in behind him, and strutting till he almost tumbled on his head, led the march of destruction to the garden-door.

But alas, he had waited for his followers too long, eager as they were for rapine! When he came to his portal of delight, there stood, stout as Britannia herself, and sweeping a long knife for her trident, the valiant cook, to protect her cauliflowers. "You be off, Bill," she cried; "I don't want to hurt you, because you have been a good bird in your time, but now you be growing outrageous." Bill made a rush for it, but losing a slice of his top-heavy comb, retired.

"Now's my opportunity," said Mary to herself, "for to cut my own cabbage for once in my life, and to see what that old beast does in here. Oh my! The old villain, and robber that he is! Bamboozlement is the language for it." Embezzlement she should have said, and to one who knew as she did how badly the table of the master was supplied, the suspicion was almost unavoidable. For here she saw, in plenteous show, and appetising excellence, a many many of the very things she had vainly craved from

Mr. Swipes. And if it was so now in November, what must it have been two months ago? Why poor Miss Faith—Mary Knuckledown's idol, because of her kindness and sad disappointment—had asked a little while ago for a bit of salsify, not for herself—she never thought of herself—but for a guest who was fond of it; also the Admiral himself had called out for a good dish of skirrets. But no; Mr. Swipes said the weather and the black blight had destroyed them. Yet here they were; Mary could swear to them both, with their necks above ground, as if waiting for the washing! Cauliflowers also (as the cooks call broccoli of every kind), here they were in abundance, ten long rows all across the middle square, very beautiful to behold. Some were just curling in their crinkled coronets, to conceal the young heart that was forming, as Miss in her teens draws her tresses around the first peep of her own palpitation; others were showing their broad candid bosoms, with bold sprigs of nature's green lace crisping round; while others had their ripe breasts shielded from the air by the breakage of their own broad fringe upon them.

Mary knew that this was done by Mr. Swipes himself, because he had brought her some in that condition; but the unsuspecting master had accepted his assurance that “they

was only fit for pigs as soon as the break-stalk blight come on 'em," and then the next day he had bought the very same, perhaps at ninepence apiece, from Mr. Cheeseman's window, trimmed and shorn close, like the head of a monk. "I'll see every bit of 'un, now that I be here," Mrs. Knuckledown spoke aloud, to keep up her courage. "Too bad for that old beast to keep us locked out from the very place us ought to have for pommylarding, because he saith all the fruit would go into our pockets. And what goes into his'en, I should like to know. Suppose I lock him out, as he hath locked us out. He won't be back yet, for half an hour, any way. Wish I could write—what a list I would make, if it was only of the things he denieth he hath got!"

Strong in her own honesty and loyalty to her master, the cook turned the key in the lock, and left Swipes to ring himself into his own garden, as he always called it. That is to say, if he should return, which was not very likely, before she had time for a good look round. But she saw such a sight of things she had longed for, to redeem her repute in the vegetable way, as well as such herbs for dainty stuffing, of which she knew more than cooks generally do, that her cap nearly came off her head with amazement, and time flew by unheeded. Until she was startled and terrified sadly by the loud angry

clang of the bell in the gable. Not only was Mr. Swipes come back, but he was in a furious rage outside, though his fury was chilled with some shivers of fear. At first, when he found the door locked against him, he thought that the Admiral must have come home unexpected, and failing to find him at work, had turned the key against him, while himself inside. If so, his situation would be in sad peril, and many acres of lies would be required to redeem it. For trusting in his master's long times of absence, and full times of public duty when at home, Mr. Swipes had grown more private stock, as he called it, and denied the kitchen more than he had ever done before, in special preparation for some public dinners about to be given at the *Darling Arms*, by military officers to naval, and in turn by the latter to the former; for those were hospitable days when all true Britons stuck their Country's enemy with knife and fork, as well as sword.

But, learning, as he soon did at the stables, that the Admiral was still away, and both the young ladies were gone for a ride with Miss Twemlow, the gardener came back in a rage, and rang the bell. “Oh, whatever shall I do”—the trembling Mary asked herself—“best take the upper hand if I can. He's a thief, and a rogue, and he ought to be frightened. Does he

know I can't write? No for certain he dothn't. One of his big lies about me was a letter I wrote to poor Jonadab."

With her courage renewed by the sense of that wrong, she opened the door, and stood facing Mr. Swipes, with a piece of paper in her hand, which a woman's quick wit bade her fetch from her pocket.

"Halloo, madam!" the gardener exclaimed, with a sweep of his hat, and a low salute, which he meant to be vastly satirical; "so your ladyship have come to take the air, in my poor garden, instead of tending the spit. And what do your ladyship think of it, so please you? Sorry as I had any dung about, but hadn't no warning of this royal honour."

"Sir," said Mrs. Knuckledown, pretending to be frightened a great deal more than she was; "oh, sir, forgive me! I am sure I meant no harm. But the fowls was running in, and I ran up to stop them."

"Oh, that was how your ladyship descended; and to keep out the fowls you locked out me! Allow me the royal and unapparelled honour of showing your ladyship to her carriage; and if I ever catch her in here again, I'll pitch you down the courtyard pretty quick. Be off, you dirty baggage, or I won't answer for it now!"

“ Oh, you are too kind, Mr. Swipes ; I am sure you are too gentle, to forgive me, like of that ! And the little list I made of the flowers in your garden, I shall put it in a tea-pot till the Quality wants something.”

Mr. Swipes gave a start, and his over-watered eyes could not meet those of Mary, which were mildly set upon them. “ List ! ” he muttered, “ little list ! What do you please to mean, Miss ? ”

“ Well, the ‘ dirty baggage ’ means nothing unparalleled, sir, but just the same as anybody else might do. Some people calls it a Inventionary, and some an Emmarandum, and some a Catalogue. It don’t interfere with you, Mr. Swipes ; only the next time as Miss Dolly asks, the same as she was doing the other day—— ”

“ Oh, she was, was she ? The little—— ” Mr. Swipes used a word concerning that young lady which would have insured his immediate discharge, together with one from the Admiral’s best toe—“ And pray, what was her observations, ma’am ? ”

“ It was Charles told me, for he was waiting at dinner. Seems that the turnip was not to her liking, though I picked out the very best of what few you sent in ! so she looks up from her plate, and she says—‘ Well, I cannot understand it ! To me it is the greatest mistress in the world,’ she says, ‘ that we never can get a bit of

vegetable fit for eating. 'We've got,' she says, 'a kitchen-garden close upon two acres, and a man who calls himself head-gardener, by the name of Swipes'—my pardoning to you, Mr. Swipes, for the young lady's way of saying it—'and his two sons, and his nephew, and I dare say soon his grandsons. Well, and what comes of it?' says she: 'Why, that we never has a bit of any kind of vegetable, much less of fruit, fit to lay a fork to!' Charles was a pricking up his ears at this, because of his own grumbles, and the master saw it, and he says 'Hush, Dolly'! But she up and answers spiritly—'No, I won't hush, papa, because it is too bad. Only you leave it to me,' she says, 'and if I don't keep the key from that old thief'—excuse me, Mr. Swipes, for her shocking language—'and find out what he locks up in there, my name's not Horatia Dorothy Darling.' Oh, don't let it dwell so on your mind, Mr. Swipes! You know what young ladies be. They say things random, and then goes away, and never thinks no more about it. Oh, don't be upset so—or I shall have to call Charles!'"

Mr. Swipes took his hat off, to ease his poor mind, which had lost its way altogether in other people's wickedness. "May I never set eyes on that young man no more!" he exclaimed with more pathetic force than reasoning power;

“either him or me quits this establishment to-morrow. Ah, I know well why he left his last place, and somebody else shall know to-morrow!”

“What harm have poor Charles done?” the cook asked sharply; “it wasn’t him that said it, it was Miss Dolly. Charley only told me conferentially.”

“Oh, I know what ‘conferentially’ means, when anything once gets among the womenkind! But I know a thing or two about Miss Dolly, as will give her enough to do at home, I’ll warrant, without coming spying after me and my affairs. Don’t you be surprised, cook, whatever you may hear, as soon as ever the Admiral returneth. He’s a soft man enough in a number of ways, but he won’t put up with everything. The nasty little vixen, if she don’t smart for this!”

“Oh, don’t’e, now don’t’e, Mr. Swipes, that’s a dear!” cried the soft-hearted Mrs. Knuckle-down; “don’t’e tell on her, the poor young thing. If her hath been carrying on a bit with some of them young hofficers, why it’s only natteral, and her such a young booty. Don’t’e be Dick-tell-tale, with a name to it, or without. And perhaps her never said half the things that Charles have contributed to her.” The truth was that poor Dolly had said scarcely one of them.

"Bain't no young hofficer," Mr. Swipes replied contemptuously; "ten times wuss than that, and madder for the Admiral. Give me that paper, Miss, and then, perhaps, I'll tell 'e. Be no good to you, and might be useful to me."

Mary could not give up the paper, because it was a letter from one of her adorers, which, with the aid of Jenny Shanks, she had interpreted. "No, no," she said, with a coaxing look, "by and by, Mr. Swipes, when you have told me who it is, and when you have promised not to tell on poor Miss Dolly. But nobody shan't see it, without your permission. We'll have another talk about that to-morrow. But, oh my! look at the time you have kept me, with all the good things to make a Hangel's mouth water! Bring me two cauliflowers in two seconds. My beef will want basting long ago; and if Dandy hathn't left his job, he'll be pretty well roasted hisself by now."

Mr. Swipes went muttering up the walk, and was forced to cut two of the finest cauliflowers intended for Cheeseman's adornment to-morrow. This turned his heart very sour again, and he shook his head, growling in self-commune: "You see if I don't do it, my young lady. You speaks again me, behind my back; and I writes again you, before your face; though, in course, I need not put my name to it."

CHAPTER IX.

LOYAL, AYE LOYAL.

ONE of the dinners at the *Darling Arms*, and perhaps the most brilliant and exciting of the whole, because even the waiters understood the subject, was the entertainment given in the month of December, A.D. 1803, not only by the officers of two regiments quartered for the time near Stonnington, but also by all the leading people round about those parts, in celebration of the great work done by His Majesty's 38-gun frigate *Leda*. Several smaller dinners had been consumed already, by way of practice, both for the cooks and the waiters and the chairman, and Mr. John Prater, who always stood behind him, with a napkin in one hand and a corkscrew in the other, and his heart in the middle, ready either to assuage or stimulate. As for the guests, it was always found that no practice had been required.

“But now, but now”—as Mr. Prater said, when his wife pretended to make nothing of it,

for no other purpose than to aggravate him, because she thought that he was making too much money, in proportion to what he was giving her—"now we shall see what Springhaven can do for the good of the Country and the glory of herself. Two bottles and a half a head is the lowest that can be charged for, with the treble X outside, and the punch to follow after. His lordship is the gentleman to keep the bottle going."

For the Lord-lieutenant of the county, the popular Marquis of Southdown, had promised to preside at this grand dinner; and everybody knew what that meant. "Short tongue and long throat"—was his lordship's motto in the discharge of all public business, and "bottle to the gentleman on my left!" was the practical form of his eulogies. In a small space like this, there would be no chance for a sober-minded guest to escape his searching eye; and Blyth Scudamore (appointed to represent the officers of the *Leda*, and therefore the hero of the evening) felt as happy as a dog being led to be drowned, in view of this liquid ordeal. For Blyth was a temperate and moderate young man, neither such a savage as to turn his wine to poison, nor yet so Anti-Christian as to turn it into water.

Many finer places had been offered for the feast, and foremost amongst them the Admiral's

house ; but the committee with sound judgment had declined them all. The great point was to have a place within easy reach of boats, and where gallant naval officers could be recalled at once, if the French should do anything outrageous, which they are apt to do at the most outrageous time. But when a partition had been knocked down, and the breach tacked over with festoons of laurel, Mr. Prater was quite justified in rubbing his red hands and declaring it as snug a box as could be for the business. There was even a dark elbow where the staircase jutted out, below the big bressemer of the partition, and made a little gallery for ladies to hear speeches, and behold the festive heroes while still fit to be beholden. And Admiral Darling, as vice-chairman, entering into facts masculine and feminine, had promised his daughter and Miss Twemlow (under charge of the rector's wife and Mrs. Stubbard) a peep at this heroic scene, before it should become too convivial. The rescuers also of the *Blonde*, the flesh and bone, without which the master brain must still have lain stranded, were to have a grand supper in the covered skittle alley, as the joints came away from their betters, this lower deck being in command of Captain Tugwell, who could rouse up his crew as fast as his lordship roused the officers.

Admiral Darling had been engaged of late in the service of his Country so continually, and kept up and down the great roads so much, or in and out of any little port where sailors grew, that his own door had nearly forgotten his shadow, and his dining-room table the reflection of his face. For in those days, to keep a good table implied that the table must be good, as well as what was put upon it; and a linen shroud spread upon turpentine was not yet considered the proper footing for the hospitable and social glass.

“When shall Twemlow and I have a hob-nob again?” the Admiral asked himself many a time; “how the dear old fellow loves to see the image of his glass upon the table, and the ruby of his port reflected! Heigho, I am getting very stiff in the back, and never a decent bit of dinner forr’ard. And as for a glass of good wine—oh Lord, my timbers will be broken up, before it comes to mend them! And when I come home for even half an hour, there is all this small rubbish to attend to. I must have Frank home, to take this stuff off my hands, or else keep what I abominate—a private secretary.”

Among the pile of letters that had lain unopened, was one which he left to the last, because he disliked both the look and the smell of it. A dirty ugly scrawl it was, bulged out with clumsy folding, and dabbed with wax in

the creases. With some dislike, he tore it open ; and the dislike became loathing, as he read.

“ Hon^d Sir. These foo lines comes from a umble but arty frend to command. Rekwesting of your pardon sir, i have kep a hi same been father of good dawters on the goings on of your fammeley. Miss Faith she is a hangel sir but Miss Dolly I fere no better than she ort to be, and wonderful fond of been noticed. I see her keeping company and carryin on dreddful with a tall dark young man as meens no good and lives to Widow Shankses. Too nites running when the days was short she been up to the cornder of your grounds to meat he there ever so long. Only you hask her if you dont beleave me and wash her fase same time sir. Too other peple besides me nose it. Excoose hon^d sir this trubble from your obejiant servant

“ FAX AND NO MISSTAKE.”

The Admiral’s healthy face turned blue with rage and contempt, and he stamped with his heel, as if he had the writer under it. To write a stabbing letter, and to dare to deal the stab, and yet fear to show the hand that deals it, was at that time considered a low thing to do. Even now, there are people who so regard it ; though a still better tool for a blackguard—the anonymous postcard—is now superseding it.

All the old man's pleasure, and cheer, and comfort, and joy in having one day at home at last, were dashed and shattered and turned into wretched anxiety by this vile scrawl. He meant to have gone down, light of heart, with a smiling daughter upon either arm, to the gallant little festival where everybody knew him, and every one admired and loved him. His two pretty daughters would sit upstairs, watching from a bow-window (though themselves unseen) all the dashing arrivals and the grand apparel. Then when the Marquis made his speech, and the King and Queen and Royal Family rode upon the clouds, and the grandeur of Great Britain was above the stars of heaven—the ladies in the gallery would venture just to show themselves, not for one moment with a dream of being looked at, but from romantic loyalty, and the fervour of great sentiments. People pretending not to know would ask—"Who are those very lovely ladies?" And he would make believe to know nothing at all about it; but his heart would know whether he knew it or not.

On the very eve of all this well-earned bliss, when it would have refreshed his fagged body and soul—which were now not so young as they used to be—to hear from some scoundrel without a name, that his pet child, the life of his life, was no better than she ought to be, which

being said of a woman means that she is as bad as she can be! This fine old gentleman had never received such a cowardly back-handed blow till now, and for a moment he bent under it.

Then, greatly ashamed of himself, he arose, and with one strong word which even Mr. Twemlow might have used under such provocation, he trod the vile stuff under foot, and pitched it with the fire-tongs into the fire. After this he felt better, and resolving most stoutly that he never would let it cross his mind again, made a light and cheerful answer to the profligate one —his young girl who came seeking him.

“Oh father, and you ought to be dressed!” she cried. “Shall we keep His Majesty the Lord-lieutenant waiting? Don’t let us go at all. Let us stop at home, papa. We never see you now, more than once in a month; and we don’t want to see you from a staircase-hole, where we mustn’t even blow a kiss to you. I have got such a lot of things to tell you, dear father; and I could make you laugh, much more than they will.”

“But, my darling—all these grand things?” said the father, gently fingering but half afraid to look at her, because of what had been in his own mind; “the sweetest Navy blue, and the brightest Army red, and little bits of silver lace so quiet in between them! I am sure I don’t

know what to call a quarter of it; but the finest ship ever seen under full sail, with the sun coming through her from her royals to her courses——”

“Now, papa, don’t be so ridiculous. You know that I am not a fine ship at all, but only a small frigate, about eighteen guns at the outside I should say—though she would be a sloop of war, wouldn’t she?—and come here at any rate for you to command her, if you are not far too lofty an Admiral.”

“Do you love your old father, my dear?” said he, being carried beyond his usual state by the joy in her eyes as she touched him.

“What a shame to ask me such a question! Oh papa, I ought to say—‘Do you love me?’—when you go away weeks and months almost together! Take that, papa; and be quite ashamed of yourself.”

She swept all her breast-knots away anyhow—that had taken an hour to arbitrate—and flung back her hair that would never be coiled, and with a flash of tears leaping into laughing eyes, threw both arms round her father’s neck, and pressed her cool sweet lips to his, which were not at all in the same condition.

“There, see what you’ve done for me now!” she cried; “it will take three-quarters of an hour, papa, to make me look fit to be looked at again.

The fashions are growing so ridiculous now—it is a happy thing for us that we are a hundred years behind them, as Eliza Twemlow had the impudence to say; and really, for the daughter of a clergyman——”

“I don’t care that for Eliza Twemlow;” the Admiral exclaimed, with a snap of his thumb. “Let her show herself—as much as there is demand for. Or rather, what I mean to say is, let Miss Twemlow be as beautiful as nature has made her, my dear; and no doubt that is very considerable. But I like you to be different; and you are. I like you to be simple, and shy, and retiring, and not to care twopence what any one thinks of you, so long as your father is contented.”

Dolly looked at her father, as if there were no other man in the world for the moment. Then her conscience made her bright eyes fall, as she whispered—“To be sure, papa. I only put these things on, to please you; and if you don’t like them, away they go. Perhaps I should look nicer, in my great-aunt’s shawl. And my feet would be warmer, oh ever so much! I know where it is, and if you prefer the look of it——”

“No, no!” cried the simple old father, as the girl tripped away in hot haste to seek for it; “I forbid you to make such a guy of yourself. You

must not take my little banter, darling, in such a matter-of-fact way, or I must hold my tongue."

"Thank God," he continued to himself, as Miss Dolly ran away, to repair her damages; "the simple little soul thinks of nobody but me! How could I be such a fool as to imagine harm of her? Why, she is quite a child, a bigger child than I am! I shall enjoy my evening all the more for this."

And truly there seemed to be no reason why all the guests at that great festival, save those who had speeches to make, should not enjoy their evening thoroughly. Great preparations had been made, and goodly presents contributed; plenty of serving-men would be there, and John Prater (now growing white-headed and portly) was becoming so skilful a caterer, that if anything was suggested to him, he had always thought of it long ago. The only grief was that the hour should be so late—five o'clock, an unchristian time, as they said, for who could have manners, after starving so long?

There was some sense in this; but the unreasonable lateness of the hour could not be helped; because the Lord-lieutenant had to wait upon the King, at eight o'clock that morning. That he could do so, and yet be in Spring-haven by five, seemed almost impossible; for only ten years ago the journey took two days.

But the war seemed to make everything go quicker, and it was no use to wonder at anything. Only if everything else went quicker, why should dinner (the most important of them all) come slower? And as yet there was nobody to answer this; though perhaps there is no one to ask it now.

All things began very beautifully. The young ladies slipped in unobserved, and the elder blessings of mankind came after, escorting themselves with dignity. Then the heroes who had fought, and the gallants who had not had the luck yet, but were eager for it, came pleasantly clanking in, well-girt to demolish ox and sheep, like Ajax, in lack of loftier carnage. The rector said grace, and the Marquis amen, and in less than two minutes every elbow was up, and every mouth at business. There was very little talking for the first half-hour. In those days emptiness was not allowed to make the process of filling a misery.

While these fine fellows were still in the prime of their feeding, bent over and upon it, two men with empty stomachs, and a long way between them and their victuals, stood afar regarding them. That is to say, just far enough to be quite out of sight from the windows, in the gloom of the December evening; but at the same time near enough to their own unhappy

ness, to see and even smell the choice affairs across the road.

“For what then hast thou brought me here?” the shorter man sharply asked the tall one, both being in an uncomfortable place in a hedge, and with briars that scratched them. “Is it to see other people eat, when to eat myself is impossible? You have promised to show me a very fine thing, and leagues have I traversed to please you. Fie then, what is it? To see eat, eat, eat, and drink, drink, drink, and have nothing for myself!”

“My friend,” said the tall man, “I have not brought you here, with any desire to improve your appetite, which is always abundant, and cannot be gratified for several hours; and with poor stuff then, compared to what you are beholding. Those men are feeding well. You can see how they enjoy it. There is not a morsel in their mouths that has not a very choice flavour of its own distinguished relish. See, there is the venison just waiting to be carved, and a pheasant between every two of them. If only the wind was a little more that way, and the covers taken off the sauce-boats, and the gravy—ah, do I perceive a fine fragrance, or is it a desirous imagination?”

“Bah, you are of the cold-blood, the wicked self-command. For me it is either to rush in,

or rush away. No longer can I hold my nose and mouth. And behold they have wine—grand wine—the wine of Sillery, of Volnay, of Latour, and of Chambertin! By the bottles I can tell them, and by all the Saints——”

“Be not so excited, for you cannot smack the lips. It is too late now to envy them their solids, because they have made such speed with them. But listen, my dear friend”—and here the tall man whispered into the ear of his brisk companion, who danced with delight in the ungenial hedge, till his face was scarred with brambles.

“It is magnificent, it is droll, it is what you call in England one grand spree, though of that you understand not the signification. But, my faith, it is at the same time barbarous, and almost too malignant!”

“Too benevolent Charron,” said the tall stern man, “that shall rest upon my conscience, not on yours. The object is not to spoil their noisy revel, but to gain instruction of importance. To obtain a clear idea of the measures they adopt—ah, you see, you are as quick as lightning. This urgent message is upon official paper, which I have taken from the desk of that very stupid Stubbard. Take the horse Jerry holds at the corner; and the officer’s hat and cape provided are ample disguise for so dark a

night. Take the lane behind the hills, and gallop two miles eastward, till you come to the shore again, then turn back towards the village by way of the beach, and you will meet the Coast-guard on duty, a stupid fellow called Vickers. Your horse by that time will be piping and roaring; he can go like the wind, but his own is broken. The moment you see Vickers, begin to swear at your horse. I have practised you in d—ns, for an emergency."

"Ten thousand thunders, I can say d—n now, to equal and surpass the purest born of all Britons."

"Not so loud, my friend, until by-and-by. The Coast-guard will come to you, and you pull up, with your horse hanging down his head, as if dead-beaten. Using your accomplishment again, you say—'Hup, take this on to Admiral Darling. My nag is quite done, and I must get to Stonnington to call Colonel James. For your life, run, run. You'll get a guinea, if you look sharp.' Before he can think of it, turn your horse, and make back to the lane, as if for Stonnington. But instead of that, gallop back to our ruins; and we'll go up the hill, and see what comes of it."

"It is very good; it is magnificent. But will not the sentinel perceive my voice and accent?"

"Not he; he is a very honest and therefore

stupid fellow. Give him no time, answer no questions. Be all in a rush, as you so generally are. I would do it myself, but I am too well known. Say, will you undertake it? It will be a fine joke for you."

About half-an-hour after this, the Lord-lieutenant having hammered on the table with an empty bottle, stood up to propose the chief toast of the evening—the gallant crew of the *Leda*, and the bold sailors of Springhaven. His lordship had scarcely had a bottle and a half, and was now in the prime of his intellect. A very large man, with a long brocaded coat of ruby-coloured cloth, and white satin breeches, a waistcoat of primrose plush, emblazoned with the Union-jack (then the popular device) in gorgeous silks with a margin of bright gold, and a neckcloth, pointed and plaited in with the rarest lace, worth all the rest put together—what a pity it seemed that such a man should get drunk, or at any rate try so hard to do it. There was not a pimple on his face; his cheeks were rosy and glistening, but not flushed; and his eyes were as bright, and clear, and deep, as a couple of large sapphires.

This nobleman said a few words, without any excitement, or desire to create it, every word to the point, and the best that could be chosen not to go beyond the point. There was no attempt

at eloquence; the speech was more than eloquent, because it suggested so much more than was said. Many excitable natures, overcome by half a bottle, resolved to have the other half in honour of that toast.

Then the Marquis did a very kind and thoughtful thing, for which he deserved a bottle of the Royal Tokay, such as even Napoleon could not obtain. When the cheering was done, and every eye was fixed upon the blushing Scudamore—who felt himself, under that fixture, like an insect under a lens, which the sun is turning into a burning-glass—the Chairman perceived his sad plight, and to give him more time and more spirit, rose again.

“Gentlemen,” he said, “or I would rather call you brother Englishmen at this moment,—I have forgotten one thing. Before our young hero replies to his health, let us give him that spirited song ‘Billy Blue,’ which is well known to every man here, I’ll be bound. Tell the drummer down there to be ready for chorus.”

Billy Blue, though almost forgotten now (because the enemy would not fight him), the blockader of Brest, the hardy, skilful, and ever watchful Admiral Cornwallis, would be known to us nearly as well as Nelson, if fame were not a lottery.

As the Lord-lieutenant waved his hand, the

company rose with one accord, and followed the lead of his strong clear voice in the popular song, called

“ BILLY BLUE.”

1.

“ 'Tis a terrible time for Englishmen ;
 All tyrants do abhor them,
 Every one of them hath to fight with ten,
 And the Lord alone is for them.
 But the Lord hath given the strong right hand,
 And the courage to face the thunder ;
 If a Frenchman treads this English land,
 He shall find his grave thereunder.

CHORUS.

Britannia is the Ocean-Queen, and she standeth staunch and true,
 With Nelson for her faulchion keen, and her buckler Billy Blue.

2.

“ They are mustering on yon Gallic coasts,
 You can see them from this high land,
 The biggest of all the outlandish hosts
 That ever devoured an island.
 There are steeds that have scoured the Continent,
 'Ere ever one might say, ' Whoa, there ! '
 And ships that would fill the Thames and Trent,
 If we would let them go there.

CHORUS.

But England is the Ocean-Queen, and it shall be hard to do ;
 Not a Frenchman shall skulk in between herself and her
 Billy Blue.

3.

“ From the smiling bays of Devonshire
 To the frowning cliffs of Filey,
 Leaps forth every son of an English sire,
 To fight for his native isley.
 He hath drawn the sword of his father now
 From the rusty sheath it rattled in ;
 And Dobbin, who dragged the peaceful plough,
 Is neighing for the battle-din.

CHORUS.

For Albion still is Ocean’s Queen ; and though her sons be
 few,
 They can meet the world with a dauntless mien, and the flag
 of Billy Blue.

4.

“ Then pledge me your English palm, my lad,
 Keep the knuckles for Sir Frenchman ;
 No slave can you be, till you change your dad,
 And no son of yours a henchman.
 ’Tis a false peace, that puts up with wrong ;
 ’Tis the love of right that urges ;
 When the battle rages, loud and long,
 And the storm leaps over the surges.

CHORUS.

For Englishmen know what they mean, whatever them
 betideth ;
 And England shall be Ocean’s Queen, as long as the world
 abideth.”

What with the drum, and the fifes of one of
 the regiments now at Stonnington, and the
 mighty bass of some sea-captains vehement in
 chorus, these rough and rolling lines were

enough to frighten a thousand Frenchmen, while proving the vigour of British nerve, and fortitude both of heart and ear.

When people have done a thing well, they know it, and applaud one another, to include themselves; and even the ladies, who were meant to be unseen, forgot that and waved their handkerchiefs. Then up and spoke Blyth Scudamore, in the spirit of the moment; and all that he said was good and true, well-balanced and well-condensed, like himself. His quiet melodious voice went further than the Lord-lieutenant's, because it was new to the air of noise, and that fickle element loves novelty. All was silence while he spoke, and when he ceased—great uproar.

“That lad will do,” said the Marquis to his supporter on the right hand; “I was just like him at that age myself. Let me draw this cork—it is the bottle of the evening. None but my own fellows understand a cork, and they seem to have got away somewhere. What the doose are they about—why halloo, Darling! What’s the meaning of all this, at such a time?”

“Well, my lord, you must judge for yourself,” said the Admiral, who had made his way quietly from the bottom of the table. “We know that false alarms are plentiful. But this looks like business, from the paper it is written

on; and I know that old Dudgeon is as solid as myself. Vickers the Coast-guard brought it in, from an officer whose horse was blown, who had orders to get somehow to Stonnington."

"Is Vickers a knave, or a fool who is likely to be made the victim of a very low joke? There are hundreds of jealous scoundrels eager to spoil every patriotic gathering. Ah, this looks rather serious though, if you can vouch for the paper."

"I can vouch for the paper, my lord, and for Vickers; but not for Dudgeon's signature. Of that I have no knowledge—though it looks right enough, so far as I know. Shall I read it aloud, and let Officers who are not under my command judge for themselves; as I shall judge for those I have the honour to command?"

The Lord-lieutenant, with his cork just squeaking in the neck of the bottle, nodded; and the Admiral, with officers crowding round, read aloud as follows, part being in type, and part in manuscript.

"Commander of Coast-defence at Hythe,
to Vice-Admiral Darling, Springhaven.

"French fleet standing in, must have slipped Cornwallis. Do all you can. Not a moment to lose.

"(Signed) BELLAMY DUDGEON."

“ Well it may be true, or it may be a lie ; ” said the Marquis, pouring carefully ; “ my opinion is the latter ; but I have nothing to do with it officially, according to the new arrangements. Every gentleman must judge for himself. And I mean to abide by my own judgment, which strongly recommends me to finish this bottle.”

“ Probably you are right enough ; and in your place perhaps I should do the same ; ” the Admiral answered quietly ; “ but be the alarm either true or false, I am bound to take it in earnest. All Naval Officers present will be good enough to follow me, and prepare to rejoin if ordered. We shall very soon know from the signal-point, unless fog has set in suddenly, whether we are bound to beat a general alarm.”

All the sons of the sea arose quietly, and were despatched with brief orders to the right and left, to communicate with their signal stations, while Stubbard hurried back to his battery.

“ What cold blood they do display ! ” whispered the Frenchman, who had returned with the author of the plot to watch the issue from a point of vantage. “ My faith, they march slowly for their native land ! Not less than six bottles of great French wine did I anticipate to steal through the window, while they fell out

precipitous. But there sits a man big enough to leave me nothing—not even a remainder of my own body. Soul of St. Denis, can it be, that they question the word of a gentleman ? ”

“ Not they ! ” replied Carne, who was vexed however ; “ they are taking things easily, according to the custom of the nation. But two good things we have done, friend Charron ; we have learned their proceedings ; and we have spoiled their feasting.”

“ But not at all ; Behold you, they are coming back to enjoy it all the more ! ” cried the Frenchman. “ Oh that I were an Englishman, to get such a dinner, and to be so loyal to it ! ”

CHAPTER X.

FAIR CRITICISM.

FEW things can be worse for a very young woman, than to want to be led by somebody, and yet find nobody fit to do it. Or at any rate, through superior quickness and the knowledge of it, to regard old friends, and relatives of experience, as very slow coaches, and prigs or prudes, who cannot enter into quick young feelings, but deal in old saws which grate upon them.

Not to moralise about it—for if young ladies hate anything, it is such moralising—Miss Dolly Darling was now in that uncomfortable frame of mind, when advice is most needed, yet most certain to be spurned. She looked upon her loving and sensible sister, as one who was fated to be an old maid, and was meant perhaps by nature for that condition, which appeared to herself the most abject in the world. And even without that conclusion about Faith, she would have been loth to seek counsel from her, having

always resented most unduly what she called her “superior air of wisdom.” Dolly knew that she was quicker of wit than her sister—as shallow waters run more rapidly—and she fancied that she possessed a world of lively feelings, into which the slower intellect could not enter. For instance, their elder brother Frank had just published a volume of poems, very noble in their way, and glowing with ardour for freedom, democracy, and the like; as well as exhibiting fine perception of sound, and great boldness in matters beyond sounding; yet largely ungifted with knowledge of nature, whether human or superior.

“ Better stick to his law-books,” the Admiral had said, after singing out some of the rhyme of it, to the tune of *Billy Benbow*; “ never sit on the woolsack, by spewing oakum this way.”

Faith had tried, as a matter of duty, to peruse this book to its cover; but she found it beyond even her goodwill, and mild sympathy with everything, to do so. There was not the touch of nature in it which makes humble people feel, and tickles even the very highest with desire to enter into it. So Faith declared that it must be very clever, and no doubt very beautiful; but she herself was so stupid, that she could not make out very clearly what it was all about.

“ Well, I understand every word of it;”

Miss Dolly cried, with a literary look. "I don't see how you can help doing that, when you know all about Frank, who wrote it. Whenever it is not quite clear, it is because he wants us to think that he knows too much; or else because he is not quite certain, what he wants to mean himself. And as for his talk about freedom, and all that, I don't see why you should object to it. It is quite the fashion with all clever people now, and it stops them from doing any mischief. And nobody pays much attention to them, after the cruel things done in France, when I was seven or eight years old. If I see Frank, I shall tell him that I like it."

"And I shall tell him that I don't," said Faith. "It cannot do anybody any good. And what they call 'freedom' seems to mean making free with other people's property."

These poems were issued in one volume, and under one title—*The Harmodiad*; although there must have been some half-hundred of them, and not more than nine odes to freedom in the lot. Some were almost tolerable, and others lofty rubbish, and the critics (not knowing the author) spoke their bright opinions freely. The poet, though shy as a mouse in his preface, expected a mountain of enquiry as to the identity of this new bard, and modestly signed himself "Asteroid," which made his own father stare

and swear. Growing sore prematurely from much keel-hauling—for the reviewers of the period were patriotic, and the English public anti-Gallic—Frank quitted his chambers at Lincoln's Inn, and came home to be comforted for Christmas. This was the wisest thing that he could do, though he felt that it was not Harmodian. In spite of all crotchets, he was not a bad fellow, and not likely to make a good lawyer.

As the fates would have it (being naturally hostile to poets who defy them), by the same coach to Stonnington came Master Johnny, in high feather for his Christmas holidays. Now these two brothers were as different of nature as their sisters were, or more so; and unlike the gentler pair, each of these cherished lofty disdain for the other. Frank looked down upon the schoolboy, as an unlicked cub without two ideas; the bodily defect he endeavoured to cure by frequent outward applications, but the mental shortcoming was beneath his efforts. Johnny meanwhile, who was as hard as nails, no sooner recovered from a thumping than he renewed and redoubled his loud contempt for a great lout over six feet high, who had never drawn a sword or pulled a trigger. And now for the winter this book would be a perpetual snowball for him to pelt his big brother with, and yet (like a critic)

be scarcely fair object for a hiding. In season out of season, up-stairs down-stairs, even in the breakfast and the dinner-chambers, this young imp poked clumsy splinters—worse than thorns, because so dull—into the tender poetic side ; and people, who laugh at the less wit the better, laughed very kindly, to please the boy, without asking whether they vexed the man. And the worst of it was, that the author too must laugh.

All this might be looked down at by a soul well hoisted upon the guy-ropes of contempt ; and now and then a very solid drubbing given handsomely (upon other grounds) to the chief tormentor, solaced the mind of unacknowledged merit. But as the most vindictive measure to the man who has written an abusive letter, is to vouchsafe him no reply ; so to the poet who rebukes the age, the bitterest answer it can give is none. Frank Darling could retaliate upon his brother Johnny, and did so whenever he could lay hold of him alone ; but the stedfast silence of his sister Faith (to whom one of his loftiest odes was addressed), and of his lively father, irked him far more than a thousand low parodies. Dolly alone was some comfort to him, some little vindication of true insight ; and he was surprised to find how quickly her intelligence (which until now he had despised) had strengthened, deepened, and enlarged itself. Still he wanted

some one older, bigger, more capable of shutting up the mouth, and nodding (instead of showing such a lot of red tongue and white teeth), before he could be half as snug as a true poet should be, upon the hobs of his own fire. And happily he found his Anti-Zoilus ere long.

One day he was walking in a melancholy mood along the beach towards Pebbleridge, doubting deeply in his honest mind whether he ever should do any good, in versification, or anything else. He said to himself that he had been too sanguine, eager, self-confident, ardent, impetuous, and if the nasty word must be faced, even too self-conceited. Only yesterday he had tried, by delicate setting of little word-traps, to lead Mr. Twemlow towards the subject, and obtain that kind-hearted man's comforting opinion. But no ; the gentle Rector would not be brought to book, or at any rate not to that book ; and the author had sense enough to know without a wink, that his volume had won volumes of dislike.

Parnassus could never have lived till now, without two heads—one to carry on with, while the other is being thumped to pieces. While the critics demolish one peak, the poet withdraws to the other, and assures himself that the general public, the larger voice of the nation, will salute him there. But alas, Frank Darling

had just discovered that even that eminence was not his, except as a desert out of human sight. For he had in his pocket a letter from his publishers, received that dreary morning, announcing a great many copies gone gratis, six sold to the trade at a frightful discount, and six to the enterprising public. All these facts combined to make him feel uncommonly sad and sore, to-day.

A man of experience could have told him, that this disappointment was for his good; but he failed to see it in that light, and did not bless the blessing. Slowly and heavily he went on, without much heed of anything, swinging his clouded cane now and then, as some slashing reviews occurred to him, yet becoming more peaceful and impartial of mind, under the long monotonous cadence and quiet repetitions of the soothing sea. For now he was beyond the Haven head—the bulwark that makes the bay a pond in all common westerly weather—and waves that were worthy of the name flowed towards him, with a gentle breeze stepping over them.

The brisk air was like a fresh beverage to him, and the fall of the waves sweet music. He took off his hat, and stopped, and listened, and his eyes grew brighter. Although the waves had nothing very distinct to say in dying, yet no two (if you hearkened well), or at any rate no two in

succession, died with exactly the same expression, or vanished with precisely the same farewell. Continual shifts went on among them, and momentary changes; each in proper sequence marching, and allowed its proper time, yet at any angle traversed, even in its crowning curl, not only by the wind its father, but by the penitent return and white contrition of its elder brother. And if this were not enough to make a samely man take interest in perpetually flowing changes, the sun and clouds, at every look and breath, varied variety.

Frank Darling thought how small his griefs were, and how vain his vanity. Of all the bubbly clots of froth, or frayed and shattered dabs of drift, flying beside him or falling at his feet, every one was as good as his ideas, and as valuable as his labours. And of all the unreckoned waves advancing, lifting their fugitive crests, and roaring, there certainly was not one that fell with weight so futile as his own. Who cared even to hear his sound? What ear was soothed by his long rhythm, or what mind solaced by the magnitude of his rolling?

Suddenly he found that he had not lived all in vain. For when he had been standing a long while thus, chewing the salt cud of marine reflections, he seemed to hear something more intelligible than the sea. With more surprise than interest

he walked towards the sound, and stood behind the corner of a jutting rock to listen. In another second, his interest overpowered his surprise, for he knew every word of the lines brought to his ears, for the very simple reason that they were his own. Round the corner of that rock, so absorbed in admiration that he could hear no footstep, a very fine young man of the highest order was reading aloud in a powerful voice, and with extremely ardent gesticulation, a fine passage from that greatly undervalued poem, the *Harmodiad*, of and concerning the beauties of Freedom—

“ No crown upon her comely head she bore,
 No wreath her affluent tresses to restrain ;
A smile, the only ornament she wore,
 Her only gem, a tear for other’s pain.
Herself did not her own repulse deplore,
 Because she lives immortal as the dew,
Which falling from the stars soon mounts again ;
 And in this wise, all space she travels through,
Beneficent as heaven, and to the earth more true.

“ Her blessings all may win who seek the prize,
 If only they be faithful, meek, and strong,
 And crave not that which other’s right denies,
 But march against the citadel of wrong.
A glorious army this, that finds allies
 Wherever God hath built the heart of man
With attributes that to Himself belong ;
 By Him ordained to crown what He began,
 And shatter despotism, which is the foul fiend’s ban.”

Frank thought that he had never heard nobler reading, sonorous, clear, well-timed, well-poised, and of harmonious cadence. The curved rock gave a melodious ring, and the husky waves a fine contrast to it, while the reader was so engrossed with grandeur—the grandeur of Frank's own mind!—that his hat could evidently not contain his head, but was flung at the mercy of his feet. What a fine, expressive, and commanding face!

If Frank Darling had been a Frenchman—which he sometimes longed to be, for the sake of that fair Liberty—the scene, instead of being awkward, would have been elegant, rapturous, ennobling. But being of the clumsy English race, he was quite at a loss what to do with himself. On paper he could be effusive, ardent, eloquent, sentimental; but not a bit of that to meet the world in his own waistcoat. He gave a swing to his stick, and walked across the opening, as if he were looking at sea-gulls. And on he would have walked without further notice, except a big gulp in his throat, if it had not been for a trifling accident.

Somehow or other the recitative gentleman's hat turned over to the wind, and that active body (which never neglects any sportive opportunity) got into the crown, with the speed of an upstart, and made off with it along the stones.

A costly hat it was, and comely with rich braid and satin loops, becoming also to a well-shaped head, unlike the chimney-pot of the present day, which any man must thank God for losing. However, the owner was so wrapped up in poetry, that his breeches might have gone without his being any wiser.

“Sir,” said Frank Darling, after chasing the hat (which could not trundle as our pots do, combining every possible absurdity), “excuse me for interrupting you, but this appears to be your hat, and it was on its way to a pool of salt water.”

“Hat! My hat?” replied the other gentleman; “oh to be sure. I had quite forgotten. Sir, I am very much obliged to you. My hat might have gone to the devil, I believe—I was so delightfully occupied. Such a thing never happened to me before, for I am very hard indeed to please; but I was reading, sir; I was reading. Accept my thanks, sir; and I suppose I must leave off.”

“I thought that I heard a voice;” said Frank, growing bold with fear that he should know no more, for the other was closing his book with great care, and committing it to a pouch buckled over his shoulder; “and I fear that I broke in upon a pleasant moment; perhaps I should have pleased you better, if I had left this hat to drown.”

“I seem ungrateful ;” the stranger answered, with a sweet but melancholy smile, as he donned his hat and then lifted it gracefully to salute its rescuer ; “but it is only because I have been carried far away from all thoughts of self, by the power of a much larger mind. Such a thing may have occurred to you, sir, though it happens very seldom in one life. If so, you will know how to forgive me.”

“I scarcely dare ask,—or rather I would say”—stammered the anxious poet—“that I cannot expect you to tell me the name of the fortunate writer, who has moved you so.”

“Would to Heaven that I could !” exclaimed the other. “But this great poet has withheld his name—all great poets are always modest—but it cannot long remain unknown. Such grandeur of conception, and force of language, combined with such gifts of melody, must produce universal demand to know the name of this benefactor. I cannot express myself as I would desire, because I have been brought up in France, where literature is so different, and people judge a work more liberally, without recourse to politics. This is a new work, only out last week ; and a friend of mine, a very fine judge of literature, was so enchanted with it, that he bought a score of copies at once, and as my good stars ordained, he sent me one. You are welcome

to see it, sir. It is unknown in these parts ; but will soon be known all over Europe, unless these cruel wars retard it."

With a face of deep gravity, Caryl Carne put into Frank Darling's hand a copy of his own book, quite young, but already scored with many loving marks of admiration and keen sympathy. Frank took it, and reddened with warm delight.

" You may not understand it at first," said the other ; " though I beg your pardon for saying that. What I mean is, that I can well suppose that an Englishman, though a good judge in general, would probably have his judgment darkened by insular prejudices, and the petty feeling, which calls itself patriotism, and condemns whatever is nobler and larger than itself. My friend tells me that the critics have begun to vent their little spite already. The author would treat them with calm disdain ! "

" Horribly nasty fellows ! " cried Frank. " They ought to be kicked ; but they are below contempt. But if I could only catch them here——"

" I am delighted to find," replied Carne, looking at him with kind surprise, " that you agree with me about that, sir. Read a few lines, and your indignation against that low lot will grow hotter."

" It cannot grow hotter," cried the author ;

“ I know every word that the villains have said. Why, in that first line that I heard you reading, the wretches actually asked me whether I expected my beautiful Goddess to wear her crown upon her comely tail ! ”

“ I am quite at a loss to understand you, sir. Why, you speak as if this great work were your own ! ”

“ So it is, every word of it ; ” cried Frank, hurried out of all reserve by excitement. “ At least, I don’t mean that it is a great work—though others, besides your good self, have said —are you sure that your good friend bought twenty copies ? My publishers will have to clear up that. Why they say, under date of yesterday, that they have only sold six copies altogether. And it was out on Guy Fawkes’ day, two months ago ! ”

Caryl Carne’s face was full of wonder. And the greatest wonder of all was its gravity. He drew back a little, in this vast surprise ; and shaded his forehead with one hand, that he might think.

“ I can hardly help laughing at myself,” he said, “ for being so stupid and so slow of mind. But a co-incidence like this is enough to excuse anything. If I could be sure that you are not jesting with me, seeing how my whole mind is taken up with this book—— ”

“Sir, I can feel for your surprise,” answered Frank, handing back the book, for which the other had made a sign, “because my own is even greater; for I never have been read aloud before, by anybody else I mean, of course; and the sound is very strange, and highly gratifying—at least, when done as you do it. But to prove my claim to the authorship of the little work which you so kindly esteem, I will show you the letter I spoke of.”

The single-minded poet produced from near his heart a very large letter with much sealing wax endorsed; and the fervent admirer of his genius read—

“DEAR SIR. In answer to your favour to hand, we beg to state that your poetical work the *Harmodiad*, published by our firm, begins to move. Following the instructions in your last, we have already disposed of more than fifty copies. Forty-two of these have been distributed to those who will forward the interests of the book, by commanding it to the Public. Six have been sold to the trade at a discount of 75 per cent., and six have been taken by private purchasers, at the full price of ten shillings. We have reason to anticipate a more rapid sale hereafter. But the political views expressed in the poems—as we frankly stated to you at first—are

not likely to be popular just now, when the Country is in peril, and the Book-trade incommoded, by the immediate prospect of a French invasion. We are, dear Sir, your obedient servants, TICKLEBOIS, LATHERUP, BLINKERS & Co.—To Mr. FRANK DARLING, Springhaven Hall."

" You cannot call that much encouragement," said Frank; " and it is a most trusty and honourable house. I cannot do what a friend of mine has done, who went to inferior publishers—denounce them as rogues, and call myself a martyr. If the book had been good, it would have sold; especially as all the poets now are writing vague national songs, full of slaughter and brag, like that 'Billy Blue' thing all our fishermen are humming."

" You have nothing to do but to bide your time. In the long run, fine work is sure to make its way. Meanwhile I must apologise for praising you to your face—in utter ignorance, of course. But it must have made you feel uncomfortable."

" Not at all. Far otherwise," said the truthful Frank. " It has been the very greatest comfort to me. And strange to say, it came just when I wanted it most sadly. I shall never forget your most kind approval."

" In that case, I may take the liberty of

introducing myself, I trust. You have told me who you are, in the most delightful way. I have no such claim upon your attention, or upon that of the world at large. I am only the last of an ill-fated race, famous for nothing, except ruining themselves. I am Caryl Carne of yonder ruin, which you must have known from childhood."

Frank Darling lifted his hat in reply to the other's more graceful salutation, and then shook hands with him heartily. "I ought to have known who you are," he said; "for I have heard of you often at Springhaven. But you have not been there, since I came down; and we thought that you had left the neighbourhood. Our little village is like the ear of the tyrant, except that it carries more false than true sound. I hope you are come to remain among us, and I hope that we shall see you at my father's house. Years ago I have heard that there used to be no especial good-will between your family and mine—petty disputes about boundaries, no doubt. How narrow and ridiculous such things are! We live in a better age than that, at any rate, although we are small enough still in many ways."

"You are not; and you will enlarge many others." Carne answered, as if the matter were beyond debate. "As for boundaries now, I have none, because the estates are gone; and I am all

the richer. That is the surest way to liberate the mind."

"Will you oblige me," said Frank, to change the subject, for his mind did not seek to be liberated so, and yet wished its new admirer to remain in admiration, "by looking along the shore towards Springhaven as far as you can see, and telling me whether any one is coming? My sisters were to follow me, if the weather kept fine, as soon as they had paid a little visit at the rectory. And my sight is not good for long distances."

"I think I can see two ladies coming, or at any rate two figures moving, about a mile or more away, where the sands are shining in a gleam of sunlight. Yes, they are ladies! I know by their walk. Good-bye. I have a way up the cliff from here. You must not be surprised if you do not see me again. I may have to be off for France. I have business there, of which I should like to talk to you. You are so far above mean prejudice. If I go, I shall carry this precious volume with me. Farewell, my friend, if I may call you so."

"Do wait a minute," cried the much admiring Frank; "or walk a few yards with me towards Springhaven. It would give me such pleasure to introduce you to my sisters. And I am sure they will be so glad to know you,

when I tell them what I think. I very seldom get such a chance as this."

"There is no resisting that!" replied the graceful Carne; "I have not the honour of knowing a lady in England, except my aunt Mrs. Twemlow, and my cousin Eliza—both very good, but to the last degree insular."

"It is very hard to help being that, when people have never been out of an island. But I fear that I am taking you out of your way."

In a few minutes, these two young men drew near to the two young women, whose manners were hard put to hide surprise. When their brother introduced Mr. Carne to them, Faith bowed rather stiffly, for she had formed without reason a dark and obstinate dislike to him. But the impetuous Dolly ran up, and offered him both her hands, and said—"Why, Mr. Carne saved both our lives, only a few days ago."

CHAPTER XI.

NEITHER AT HOME.

THOUGH Admiral Darling had not deigned to speak to his younger daughter, about that vile anonymous charge, he was not always quite comfortable in his inner mind concerning it. More than once he thought of asking Faith's opinion, for he knew her good sense and discretion ; but even this was repugnant to him, and might give her the idea that he cherished low suspicions. And then he was called from home again, being occupied among other things with a vain enquiry about the recent false alarm. For Carne and Charron had managed too well, and judged too correctly the character of Vickers, to afford any chance of discovery. So that when the Admiral came home again, his calm, and—in its fair state—gentle nature was ruffled by the prosperity of the wicked.

“ Oh, he is a fine judge of poetry, is he ? ” he said more sarcastically than his wont ; “ that means, I suppose, that he admires yours, Frank.

Remember what Nelson said about you. The longer I live, the more I find his views confirmed."

"Papa, you are too bad! You are come home cross;" cried Dolly, who always took Frank's part now; "what does my Godfather know of poetry indeed? If he ever had any ear for it, the guns would have ruined it long ago."

"No mostacchio in my house!" said the master without heeding her. "I believe that is the correct way to pronounce the filthy thing—a foreign abomination altogether. Who could keep his lips clean, with that dirt over them? A more tolerant man than myself never lived—a great deal too tolerant, as everybody knows. But I'll never tolerate a son of mine in disgusting French hairiness of that sort."

"Papa, you are come home as cross as a bear!" cried Dolly, presuming on her favour. "Lord Dashville was here the other day with a very nice one, and I hear that all Cavalry Officers mean to have one, when they can. And Mr. Carne, Frank's friend, encourages it."

"The less you have to say about that young man, the better. And the less he has to say to any child of mine, the better, both for him and her, I say. I know that the age is turned upside down. But I'll not have that sort of thing at my table."

When a kind and indulgent father breaks forth thus, the result is consternation, followed by anxiety about his health. Faith glanced at Dolly, who was looking quite bewildered, and the two girls withdrew without a word. Johnny was already gone to visit Captain Stubbard, with whose eldest daughter Maggie and the cannons of the battery, he was by this time desperately in love; and poor Frank was left to have it out with the angry father.

“I very seldom speak harshly, my boy,” said the Admiral, drawing near his son gradually, for his wrath (like good vegetables) was very short of staple, “and when I do so, you may feel quite certain that there is sound reason at the bottom of it”—here he looked as if his depth was unfathomable. “It is not only that I am not myself, because of the many hours spent upon hard leather, and vile chalks of flint that go by me half asleep, when I ought to be snoring in the feathers; neither has it anything to do with my consuming the hide of some quadruped for dinner, instead of meat. And the bread is made of rye, if of any grain at all; I rather think of spent tan, kneaded up with tallow-ends, such as I have seen cast by in bushels, when the times were good. And every loaf of that costs two shillings—one for me, and one for Government! They all seem to acknowledge that I can put up

with anything ; and I make a strict point of mild language, which enables them to do it again with me. All up and down the roads, everybody likes me. But if I was shot to-morrow, would they care twopence ? ”

“ I am sure they would, sir ; and a good deal more than that ; ” answered Frank, who perceived that his father was out of his usual lines of thinking, perhaps because he had just had a good dinner—so ill do we digest our mercies—“ I am sure that there is nobody in Sussex, Kent, or Hampshire, who does not admire, and respect, and trust you.”

“ I dare say, and rejoice to see me do the work they ought to do. They have long nights in bed, every one of them, and they get their meals when they want them. I am not at all astonished at what Nelson said. He is younger than I am by a good many years ; but he seems to have picked up more than I have, in the way of common sentiments, and suchlike. ‘ You may do everybody’s work, if you are fool enough ; ’ he said to me the last time I saw him ; ‘ and ease them of their souls as well, if you are rogue enough ; as they do in the Popish countries. I am nearly sick of doing it,’ he said, and he looked it ; ‘ if you once begin with it, you must go on.’ I find it more true, every day of my life. Don’t interrupt me, don’t go on with

comfortable stuff about doing good, and one's duty towards one's Country—though I fear that you think very little of that—if I thought I had done good enough to make up for my back-aches, and three fine stumps lost through chewing patriotic sentiments, why of course I should be thankful, and make the best of my reward. But charity begins at home, my boy, and one's shirt should be considered before one's cloak. A man's family is the nearest piece of his country, and the dearest one."

"I am sure, sir, I hope," replied Frank, who had never heard his father talk like this before, "that nothing is going on amiss with us here. When you are away, I keep a sharp look-out. And if I saw anything going wrong, I should let you know of it immediately."

"No doubt you would; but you are much too soft. You are quite as easy-going as I used to be at your age"—here the Admiral looked as if he felt himself to be uncommonly hard-going now—"and that sort of thing will not do in these days. For my own discomforts I care nothing. I could live on lobscouse, or soap and bully, for a year, and thank God for getting more than I deserved. But my children, Frank, are very different. From me you would never hear a grumble, or a syllable of anything but perfect satisfaction, so long as I felt that I was doing

good work, and having it appreciated. And all my old comrades have just the same feeling. But you, who come after us, are not like that. You must have everything made to fit you, instead of making yourselves fit them. The result will be, I have very little doubt, the downfall of England in the scale of nations. I was talking to my old friend St. Vincent last week, and he most heartily agreed with me. However, I don't mean to blame you, Frank. You cannot help your unfortunate nature for stringing ends of words together that happen to sound alike. Johnny will make a fine Officer, not in the Navy, but of Artillery—Stubbard says that he has the rarest eyes he ever came across in one so young, and he wishes he could put them into his Bob's head. He shall not go back to Harrow; he can spell his own name, which seems to be all they teach them there, instead of fine scholarship, such as I obtained at Winton. But to spell his own name is quite enough for a soldier. In the Navy, we were always better educated. Johnny shall go to Chatham, when his togs are ready. I settled all about it in London, last week. Nothing hurts him. He is water-proof and thunder-proof. Toss him up anyhow, he falls upon his feet. But that sort of nature very seldom goes up high. But you, Frank, you might have done some good, without that nasty

twist of yours for writing and for rhyming, which is a sure indication of spinal complaint. Don't interrupt me; I speak from long experience. Things might be worse, and I ought to be thankful. None of my children will ever disgrace me. At the same time, things would go on better, if I were able to be more at home. That Caryl Carne, for instance,—what does he come here for?"

"Well, sir, he has only been here twice. And it took a long time to persuade him at all. He said that as you had not called upon him, he felt that he might be intruding here. And Faith, who is sometimes very spiteful, bowed, as much as to say that he had better wait. But Dolly, who is very kind-hearted, assured him that she had heard you say at least a dozen times—'be sure that I call upon Mr. Carne, to-day. What will he think of my neglect? But I hope that he will set it down to the right cause —the perpetual demands upon my time.' And when she told him that, he said that he would call the next day, and so he did."

"Ah!" cried the old man, not well pleased; "it was Dolly who took that little business off my shoulders! She might have been content with her elder sister's judgment, in a family question of that sort. But I dare say, she thought it right to make my excuses. Very

well, I'll do that for myself. To-morrow I shall call upon that young man, unless I get another despatch to-night. But I hear he wants nobody at his ruins. I suppose he has not asked even you to go there?"

"No, sir; I think he took his little place here, because it would be so painful for him to receive any friends at that tumble-down castle. He has not yet been able to do any repairs."

"I respect him for that," said the Admiral, with his generous sympathies aroused; "they have been a grand old family, though I can't say much for those I knew—except, of course, Mrs. Twemlow. But he may be a very fine young fellow, though a great deal too Frenchified, from all I hear. And why my friend Twemlow cold-shoulders him so, is something of a mystery to me. Twemlow is generally a judicious man, in things that have nothing to do with the Church. When it comes to that, he is very stiff-backed, as I have often had to tell him. Perhaps this young man is a Papist. His mother was, and she brought him up."

"I am sure I don't know, sir," answered Frank; "I should think none the worse of him if he were, unless he allowed it to interfere with his proper respect for liberty."

"Liberty be hanged!" cried the Admiral; "and that's the proper end for most of those

who prate about it, when they ought to be fighting for their Country. I shall sound him about that stuff to-morrow. If he is one of that lot, he won't come here with my good will, I can assure him. What time is he generally to be found down there? He is right over Stubbard's head, I believe; and yet friend Adam knows nothing about him! Nor even Mrs. Adam! I should have thought that worthy pair would have drawn any badger in the kingdom. I suppose the youth will see me, if I call. I don't want to go round that way for nothing. I did want to have a quiet day at home, and saunter in the garden, as the weather is so mild, and consult poor Swipes about Spring-crops, and then have a pipe or two, and take my gun to Brown Bushes for a woodcock, or a hare, and come home with a fine appetite to a good dinner. But I never must hope for a bit of pleasure now."

"You may depend upon it, sir," said Frank, "that Caryl Carne will be greatly pleased to see you. And I think you will agree with me that a more straightforward and simple-minded man is not to be found in this country. He combines what we are pleased to call our national dignity and self-respect with the elegant manners, and fraternal warmth, and *bonhomie*—as they themselves express it—of our friends across the water."

“ You be off ! I don’t want to be cross any more. Two hundred thousand friends there at this moment eager to burn down our homes, and cut our throats ! Tired as I am, I ought to take a stick to you, as friend Tugwell did to his son for much less. I have the greatest mind not to go near that young man. I wish I had Twemlow here to talk it over. Pay your fine for a French word, and be off ! ”

Frank Darling gravely laid down five shillings on his dessert-plate, and walked off. The fine for a French word in that house, and in hundreds of other English houses at this patriotic period, was a crown for a gentleman, and a shilling for a lady, the latter not being liable, except when gentlemen were present. The poet knew well that another word on his part would irritate his father to such a degree that no visit would be paid to-morrow to the admirer of the *Harmodiad*, whose admiration he was longing to reward with a series of good dinners. And so he did his utmost to ensure his father’s visit.

But when the Admiral, going warily—because he was so stiff from saddle-work,—made his way down to the house of Widow Shanks, and winking at the Royal Arms in the lower front window, where Stubbard kept Office and convenience, knocked with the knocker at the private door, there seemed to be a great deal

of thought required before anybody came to answer.

“Susie,” said the visitor, who had an especial knack of remembering Christian names, which endeared him to the Christians; “I am come to see Mr. Carne, and I hope he is at home.”

“No, that a bain’t, sir,” the little girl made answer, after looking at the Admiral as if he was an elephant, and wiping her nose with unwonted diligence; “he be gone away, sir; and please, sir, mother said so.”

“Well, here’s a penny for you, my dear, because you are the best little needlewoman in the school, they tell me. Run, and tell your mother to come and see me. Oh, Mrs. Shanks, I am very glad to see you, and so blooming in spite of all your hard work. Ah, it is no easy thing in these hard times to maintain a large family and keep the pot boiling. And everything clean as a quarter-deck. My certy, you are a woman in a thousand!”

“No, sir, no. It is all the Lord’s doing. And you to the back of him, as I always say. Not a penny can they make out as I owes justly, bad as I be at the figures, Squire. Do ‘e come in, and sit down, there’s a dear. Ah, I mind the time when you was like a dart, Squire!”

“Well, and now I am like a cannon-ball,” said the Admiral, who understood and liked this

unflattering talk ; “only I don’t travel quite so fast as that. I scarcely get time to see any old friends. But I came to look out for a young friend now, the gentleman you make so comfortable upstairs. Don’t I wish I was a young man without incumbrance, to come and lodge with such a wonderful landlady ! ”

“Ah, if there was more of your sort, sir, there’d be a deal less trouble in the world, there would. Not that my young gentleman is troublesome, mind you, only so full of them outlandish furrin ways—abideth all day long without ating ort, so different from a honest Englishman. First I used to think as he couldn’t afford it, and long to send him up a bit of my own dinner, but dursn’t for the life of me—too grand for that, by ever so—till one day little Susie there comes arunning down the stairs, and she sings out with her face as red as ever a boiled lobster—‘looky see, mother ! Oh do ‘e come and looky see ! Pollyon hath got a heap of guineas on his table, wouldn’t go into the big yellow pudding-basin ! ’ And sure enough he had, your Honour, in piles, as if he was telling of them. He had slipped out suddenly, and thought the passage-door was bolted. What a comfort it was to me, I can’t configurate. Because I could eat my dinner comfortable now, for such a big heap of money never I did see.”

“I am very glad—heartily glad,” exclaimed the smiling Admiral; “I hope he may get cash enough to buy back all the great Carne property, and kick out those rascally Jews and lawyers. But what makes Susie call him that?”

“Well, sir, the young ones must have a nickname for anything beyond them; and because he never takes no notice of them—so different from your handsome Master Frank—and some simility of his black horse, or his proud walk, to the pictur’, ‘Pollyon’ is the name they give him out of ‘Pilgrim’s Progress.’ Though not a bit like him, for such a gentleman to pay his rent and keep his place untroublesome I never had before. And a fortnight he paid me last night, afore going, and took away the keys of all three doors.”

“He is gone then, is he? To London, I dare say. It would be useless to look for him at the Castle. My son will be disappointed more than I am. To tell you the truth, Mrs. Shanks, in these days the great thing is to stick to the people that we know. The world is so full—not of rogues, but of people who are always wanting something out of one, that to talk with a thoroughly kind honest person, like yourself, is a real luxury. When the gentleman comes back, let him know that I have called.”

“And my Jenny, sir?” cried the anxious

mother, running after him into the passage, “not a word have you said about my Jenny. I hope she show no sign of flightiness.”

“Jenny is as steady as the church,” replied the Admiral; “we are going to put her on a pound a year from next quarter-day, by Mrs. Cloam’s advice. She’ll have a good stocking, by the time she gets married.”

“There never was such a pleasant gentleman, nor such a kind-hearted one, I do believe”—said Widow Shanks, as she came in with bright eyes. “What are they Carnes to the Darlings, after all? As different as night and day.”

But the Admiral’s next visit was not quite so pleasant; for when he got back into the village-road, expecting a nice walk to his luncheon and his pipe, a man running furiously almost knocked him down, and had no time to beg his pardon. The runner’s hat was off his head, and his hair blowing out; but luckily for itself his tongue was not between his teeth.

“Has the devil got hold of you at last, Jem Prater?” the Admiral asked, not profanely; for he had seen a good deal of mankind, and believed in diabolical possession.

“For Parson! For Parson!” cried Jem, starting off again, as hard as he could go. “Butter Cheeseman hath hanged his self, in

his own scales. And nobody is any good but Parson."

Admiral Darling was much disturbed. "What will the world come to? I never knew such times;" he exclaimed to himself, with some solemnity; and then set off as fast as his over-ridden state permitted, for the house of Mr. Cheeseman. Passing through the shop, which had nobody in it, he was led by the sound of voices into a little room beyond it, the room in which Mr. Cheeseman had first received Caryl Carne. Here he beheld an extraordinary scene, of which he often had to dream thereafter.

From a beam in the roof (which had nothing to do with his scales, as Jem Prater had imagined), by a long, but not well-plaited cord, was dangling the respected Churchwarden Cheeseman. Happily for him, he had relied on his own goods; and the rope being therefore of very bad hemp, had failed in this sad and too practical proof. The weight of its vendor had added to its length some fifteen inches—as he loved to pull out things—and his toes touched the floor, which relieved him now and then.

"Why don't you cut him down, you old fools?" cried the Admiral to three gaffers, who stood moralising, while Mrs. Cheeseman sat upon a barrel, sobbing heavily, with both hands spread to conceal the sad sight.

“We was afraid of hurting of him,” said the quickest-witted of the gaffers; “us wanted to know why a’ doed it,” said the deepest; and, “the will of the Lord must be done,” said the wisest.

After fumbling in vain for his knife, and looking round, the Admiral ran back into the shop, and caught up the sharp steel-blade with which the victim of a troubled mind had often unsold a sold ounce in the days of sounder conscience. In a moment, the Admiral had the poor Churchwarden in his sturdy arms, and with a sailor’s skill had unknotted the choking noose, and was shouting for brandy, as he kept the blue head from falling back.

When a little of the finest *eau de vie* that ever was smuggled had been administered, the patient rallied, and becoming comparatively cheerful, was enabled to explain that “it was all a mistake, altogether.” This removed all misunderstanding; but Rector Twemlow, arriving too late for anything but exhortation, asked a little too sternly—as everybody felt—under what influence of the Evil One, Cheeseman had committed that mistake. The reply was worthy of an enterprising tradesman, and brought him such orders from a score of miles around that the resources of the establishment could only book them.

“Sir,” he said, looking at the parson sadly, with his right hand laid upon his heart, which was feeble, and his left hand intimating that his neck was sore, “if anything has happened that had better not have been, it must have been by reason of the over-weight I give, and the value such a deal above the prices.”

CHAPTER XII.

EVERYBODY'S MASTER.

THE peril of England was now growing fast; all the faster from being kept in the dark. The real design of the enemy escaped the penetration even of Nelson; and our Government showed more anxiety about their great adversary landing on the coast of Egypt, than on that of England. Naval men laughed at his flat-bottomed boats, and declared that one frigate could sink a hundred of them; whereas it is probable that two of them, with their powerful guns and level fire, would have sunk any frigate we then possessed. But the crafty and far-seeing foe did not mean to allow any frigate, or line-of-battle ship, the chance of enquiring how that might be.

His true scheme, as everybody now knows well, was to send the English fleet upon a wild-goose chase, whether to Egypt, the west coast of Ireland, or the West Indies, as the case might be; and then by a rapid concentration

of his ships, to obtain command of the English Channel, if only for twenty-four hours at a time. Twenty-four hours of clearance from our Cruisers would have seen a hundred thousand men landed on our coast, throwing up entrenchments, and covering the landing of another hundred thousand, coming close upon their heels. Who would have faced them? A few good regiments, badly found, and perhaps worse led, and a mob of militia and raw volunteers, the reward of whose courage would be carnage.

But as a chip smells like the tree, and a hair like the dog it belongs to, so Springhaven was a very fair sample of the England whereof (in its own opinion) it formed a most important part. Contempt for the body of a man leads rashly to an under-estimate of his mind; and one of the greatest men that ever grew on earth—if greatness can be without goodness—was held in low account, because not of high inches, and laughed at as “little Boney.”

However, there were, as there always are, thousands of sensible Englishmen then; and rogues had not yet made a wreck of grand Institutions, to scramble for what should wash up. Abuses existed, as they always must; but the greatest abuse of all (the destruction of every good usage) was undreamed of yet. And the right man was even now approaching to the

rescue, the greatest Prime-Minister of any age or country.

Unwitting perhaps of the fine time afforded by the feeble delays of Mr. Addington, and absorbed in the tissue of plot and counterplot, now thickening fast in Paris—the arch-plotter in all of them being himself—the First Consul had slackened awhile his hot haste to set foot upon the shore of England. His bottomless ambition for the moment had a top, and that top was the crown of France; and as soon as he had got that on his head, the head would have no rest, until the crown was that of Europe.

But before any crown could be put on at all, the tender hearts of Frenchmen must be touched by the appearance of great danger—the danger which is of all the greatest, that to their nearest and dearest selves. A bloody farce was in preparation, noble lives were to be perjured away, and above all, the only great rival in the hearts of soldiers must be turned out of France. This foul job worked—as foul Radical jobs do now—for the good of England. If the French invasion had come to pass, as it was fully meant to do, in the month of February 1804, perhaps its history must have been written in French, for us to understand it.

So at any rate thought Caryl Carne, who knew the resources of either side, and the differ-

ence between a fine army and a mob. He felt quite sure that his mother's country would conquer his father's without much trouble, and he knew that his horn would be exalted in the land, when he had guided the conqueror into it. Sure enough then he would recover his ancestral property with interest, and be able to punish his enemies well, and reward his friends if they deserved it. Thinking of these things, and believing that his own preparations would soon be finished, he left Widow Shanks to proclaim his merits, while under the bold and able conduct of Captain Renaud Charron he ran the gauntlet of the English fleet, and was put ashore southward of Cape Grisnez. Here is a long reach of dreary exposure, facing the west unprofitably, with a shallow slope of brown sand, and a scour of tide, and no pleasant moorings. Jotted as the coast was all along (save where dry batteries grinned defiance, or sands just awash smiled treachery) with shallow transports, gunboats, prâmes, scows, bilanders, brigs, and schooners, row-galleys, luggers, and every sort of craft that has a mast, or gets on without one, and even a few good ships of war pondering malice in the safer roadsteads,—yet here the sweep of the west wind, and the long roll from the ocean following, kept a league or two, northward of the mighty defences of Boulogne, inviolate by the petty

enmities of man. Along the slight curve of the coast might be seen, beyond Ambleteuse and Wimereux, the vast extent of the French flotilla, ranged in three divisions, before the great lunette of the central camp, and hills jotted with tents thick as limpets on a rock.

Carne, (whose dealings were quite unknown to all of the French authorities save one, and that the supreme one,) was come by appointment to meet his commander, in a quiet and secluded spot. It was early February now; and although the day was waning, and the wind which was drawing to the north of west delivered a cold blow from the sea, yet the breath of Spring was in the air already, and the beat of her pulse came through the ground. Almost any man, except those twoconcerting to shed blood and spread fire, would have looked about a little at the pleasure of the earth, and felt a touch of happiness in the goodness of the sky.

Caryl Carne waited in the shelter of a tree, scarcely deserving to be called a tree, except for its stiff tenacity. All the branches were driven by the western gales, and scourged flat in one direction—that in which they best could hold together, and try to believe that their life was their own. Like the wings of a sea-bird striving with a tempest, all the sprays were frayed alike, and all the twigs hackled with the self-same pile.

Whoever comes nigh a tree like this should stop to wonder how ever it managed to make itself any sort of trunk at all, and how it was persuaded to go up, just high enough to lose the chance of ever coming down again. But Carne cared for nothing of this sort, and heeded very little that did not concern himself. All he thought of was how he might persuade his master to try the great issue at once.

While he leaned heavily against the tree, with his long sea-cloak flapping round his legs, two horsemen struck out of the Ambleteuse road, and came at hand-gallop towards him. The foremost, who rode with short stirrups, and sat his horse as if he despised him, was the foremost man of the world just now, and for ten years yet to come.

Carne ran forward to show himself, and the master of France dismounted. He always looked best upon horseback, as short men generally do, if they ride well; and his face (which helped to make his fortune) appeared even more commanding at a little distance. An astonishing face, in its sculptured beauty, set aspect, and stern haughtiness, calm with the power of transcendent mind, and a will that never met its equal. Even Carne, void of much imagination, and contemptuous of all the human character he shared, was the slave of that face, when in its

presence, and could never meet steadily those piercing eyes. And yet to the study of a neutral dog, or a man of abstract science, the face was as bad as it was beautiful.

Napoleon—as he was soon to be called by a cringing world—smiled affably, and offered his firm white hand, which Carne barely touched and bent over with deference. Then the foaming horse was sent away in charge of the attendant trooper, and the master began to take short quick steps, to and fro, in front of the weather-beaten tree; for to stand still was not in his nature. Carne, being beckoned to keep at his side, lost a good deal of what he had meant to say, from the trouble he found in timing his wonted stride to the brisk pace of the other.

“ You have done well, on the whole very well,” said Napoleon, whose voice was deep, yet clear and distinct as the sound of a bell; “ you have kept me well informed, you are not suspected, you are enlarging your knowledge of the enemy and of his resources; every day you become more capable of conducting us to the safe landing. For what then this hurry, this demand to see me, this exposing of yourself to the risk of capture? ”

Carne was about to answer; but the speaker, who undershot the thoughts of others before they were shaped—as the shuttle of the lightning

underweaves a cloud—raised his hand to stop him, and went on.

“Because you suppose that all is ripe. Because you believe that the slow beasts of islanders will strengthen their defences more by delay, than we shall strengthen our attack. Because you are afraid of incurring suspicion, if you continue to prepare. And most of all, my friend, because you are impatient to secure the end of a long enterprise. But, Captain, it must be longer yet. It is not for you, but for me to fix the time. Behold me! I am come from a grand review. We have again rehearsed the embarkation. We have again put two thousand horses on board. The horses did it well; but not the men. They are as brave as eagles, but as clumsy as the ostrich, and as fond of the sand without water. They will all be sea-sick. It is in their countenances, though many have been practised in the mouths of rivers. Those infamous English will not permit us to proceed far enough from our native land to acquire what they call the legs of the sea! If our braves are sea-sick, how can they work the cannon, or even navigate well for the accursed island? They must have time. They must undergo more waves, and a system of diet before embarkation. Return, my trusted Captain, and continue your most esteemed services for three months. I have

written these new instructions for you. You may trust me to remember this addition to your good works."

Carne's heart fell, and his face was gloomy, though he did his best to hide it. So well he knew the arrogance and fierce self-will of his commanding officer, that he durst not put his own opposite view of the case directly before him. This arrogance grew with the growth of his power; so that in many important matters Napoleon lost the true state of the case, through the terror felt by his subordinates. So great was the mastery of his presence, that Carne felt himself guilty of impertinence in carrying his head above the level of the General's plume, and stooped unconsciously—as hundreds of tall men are said to have done—to lessen this anomaly of Nature.

"All shall be done to your orders, my General," he replied submissively. "For my own position I have no fear. I might remain there from year to year, without any suspicion arising; so stupid are the people all around, and so well is my name known among them. The only peril is in the landing of stores; and I think we should desist from that. A few people have been wondering about that, though hitherto we have been most fortunate. They have set it down so far to smuggling operations, with which

in that tyrannical land all the lower orders sympathise. But it would be wiser to desist awhile; unless you, my General, have anything of moment which you still desire to send in."

"What sort of fellow is that Sheeseman?" asked Napoleon, with his wonderful memory of details; "is he more to be confided in, as a rogue, or as a fool?"

"As both, sir; but more especially as a rogue, though he has the compunctions of a fool sometimes. But he is as entirely under my thumb, as I am under that of my Commander."

"That is very good," answered the First Consul, smiling with the sense of his own power; "and at an hour's notice with fifty chosen men landed from the *London Trader*—ah, I love that name, it is appropriate—you could spike all the guns of that pretentious little battery, and lock the Commander of the Coast-Defence in one of his own cellars. Is it not so, my good Captain? Answer me not. That is enough. One question more, and you may return. Are you certain of the pilotage of the proud young fisherman, who knows every grain of sand along his native shore? Surely you can bribe him, if he hesitates at all, or hold a pistol at his ear, as he steers the leading *prâme* into the bay! Charron would be the man for that. Between you and Charron, there should be no mistake."

“He requires to be handled with much delicacy. He has no idea yet what he is meant to do. And if I understand his nature, neither bribes, nor fear would move him. He is stubborn as a Breton, and of that simple character.”

“One can always befool a Breton; but I hate that race;” said Napoleon; “if he cannot be made useful, tie a round shot to him, throw him overboard, and get a gentler native.”

“Alas, I fear that we cannot indulge in that pleasure,” said Carne with a smile of regret; “it cost me a large outlay of skill to catch him, and the natives of that place are all equally stubborn. But I have a plan for making him do our work, without being at all aware of it. Is it your wish, my General, that I should now describe that plan?”

“Not now,” replied Napoleon, pulling out a watch of English make, “but in your next letter. I start for Paris in an hour’s time. You will hear of things soon which will add very greatly to the weight and success of this grand enterprise. We shall have perfidious Albion caught in her own noose, as you shall see. You have not heard of one Captain Wright, and the landing-place at Biville. We will have our little Biville at Springhaven. There will be too many of us to swing up by a rope. Courage, my friend! The future is with you. Our regiments are

casting dice for the fairest English counties. But your native county is reserved for you. You shall possess the whole of it, I swear it by the god of war, and command the Southern army. Be brave, be wise, be vigilant, and above all things be patient."

The great man held up his hand, as a sign that he wanted his horse, and then offered it to Caryl Carne, who touched it lightly with his lips, and bent one knee—"My Emperor!" he said, "My Emperor!"

"Wait until the proper time;" said Napoleon gravely, and yet well-pleased; "you are not the first, and you will not be the last. Observe discretion. Farewell, my friend!"

In another minute he was gone, and the place looked empty without him. Carne stood gloomily watching the horsemen, as their figures grew small in the distance, the large man behind pounding heavily away, like an English dragoon, on the scanty sod, of no importance to any body—unless he had a wife, or children—the little man in front (with the white plume waving, and the well-bred horse going easily), the one whose body would affect more bodies, and certainly send more souls out of them, than any other born upon this earth as yet, and—we hope—as long as ever it endureth.

Caryl Carne cared not a jot about that. He

was anything but a philanthropist; his weaknesses, if he had any, were not dispersive but thoroughly concentric. He gathered his long cloak round his body, and went to the highest spot within his reach, about a mile from the Watch-tower at Cape Grisnez, and thence he had a fine view of the vast invasive fleet, and the vaster host behind it.

An Englishman, who loved his Country, would have turned sick at heart, and faint of spirit, at the sight before him. The foe was gathered together there, to eat us up on every side, to get us into his net and rend us, to tear us asunder as a lamb is torn, when its mother has dropped it in flight from the wolves. For forty square miles there was not an acre, without a score of tents upon it, or else of huts thrown up with slabs of wood to keep the powder dry, and the steel and iron bright and sharp to go into the vitals of England. Mighty docks had been scooped out by warlike hands, and shone with ships crowded with guns and alive with men. And all along the shore for leagues, wherever any shelter lay and great batteries protected them, hundreds of other ships tore at their moorings, to dash across the smooth narrow line, and blacken with fire and redder with blood the white cliffs of the land they loathed.

And what was there to stop them? The

steam of the multitude rose in the air, and the clang of armour filled it. Numbers irresistible, and relentless power urged them. At the beck of the hand that had called the horse, the grey sea would have been black with ships, and the pale waves would have been red with fire. Carne looked at the water way touched with silver by the soft descent of the winter sun ; and upon it, so far as his gaze could reach, there were but a dozen little objects moving, puny creatures in the distance—mice in front of a lion's den. And much as he hated with his tainted heart the land of his father, the land of his birth, some reluctant pride arose, that he was by right an Englishman.

“ It is the dread of the English seaman, it is the fame of Nelson, it is the habit of being beaten, when England meets them upon the sea —nothing else keeps this mighty host like a set of trembling captives here, when they might launch forth irresistibly. And what is a great deal worse, it will keep me still in my ruined dungeons, a spy, an intriguer, an understrapper, when I am fit to be one of the foremost. What a fool I am, so to be cowed and enslaved, by a man no better endowed than myself with anything, except self-confidence. I should have looked over his head, and told him that I had had enough of it ; and if he would not take

advantage of my toils, I would toil for him no longer. Why, he never even thanked me, that I can remember, and my pay is no more than Charron's! And a pretty strict account I have to render, of every Republican coin he sends. He will have his own head on them within six months, unless he is assassinated. His manners are not those of a gentleman. While I was speaking to him, he actually turned his back upon me, and cleared his throat! Every one hates him as much as fears him, of all who are in the rank of gentlemen. How would it pay me to throw him over, denounce my own doings, excuse them as those of a Frenchman and a French officer, and bow the knee to Farmer George? Truly if it were not for my mother, who has sacrificed her life for me, I would take that course, and have done with it. Such all-important news would compel them to replace me in the property of my forefathers; and if neighbours looked coldly on me at first, I could very soon conquer that nonsense. I should marry little Dolly, of course, and that would go half-way towards doing it. I hate that country, but I might come to like it, if enough of it belonged to me. Aha! What would my mother say, if she dreamed that I could have such ideas? And the whole of my life belongs to her. Well, let me get back to my ruins first. It would never

do to be captured by a British frigate. We had a narrow shave of it last time. And there will be a vile great moon to-night."

With these reflections—which were upon the whole more to his credit than the wonted web of thought—Carne with his long stride struck into a path towards the beach where his boat was waiting. Although he knew where to find several officers who had once been his comrades, he kept himself gladly to his loneliness; less perhaps by reason of Napoleon's orders, than from the growing charm which solitude has for all who begin to understand her.

CHAPTER XIII.

RUNNING THE GAUNTLET.

THOUGH Carne had made light, in his impatient mood, of the power of the blockading fleet, he felt in his heart a sincere respect for its vigilance and activity. *La Liberté* (as the unhappy Cheeseman's schooner was called within gunshot of France) was glad enough to drop that pretentious name, and become again the peaceful *London Trader*, when she found herself beyond the reach of French batteries. The practice of her captain, the lively Charron, was to give a wide berth to any British Cruiser appearing singly; but whenever more than one hove in sight, to run into the midst of them and dip his flag. From the speed of his schooner, he could always in a light wind show a clean pair of heels to any single heavy ship, and he had not yet come across any cutter, brig of war, or light corvette, that could collar the *Liberty* in any sort of weather. Renaud Charron was a brave young Frenchman, as fair a specimen as could

be found, of a truly engaging but not overpowering type, kindly, warm-hearted, full of enterprise, lax of morals, (unless honour—their veneer—was touched,) loving excitement, and capable of anything, except skulking, or sulking, or running away slowly.

“None of your risky tricks to-night!” said Carne, as he stood on the schooner’s deck, in the dusk of the February evening, himself in a dark mood growing darker—for his English blood supplied the elements of gloom, and he felt a dull pleasure in goading a Frenchman, after being trampled on by one of French position; “you will just make straight, as the tide and shoals allow, for our usual landing-place, set me ashore, and follow me to the old quarters. I have orders to give you, which can be given only there.”

“My commanding officer shall be obeyed,” the Frenchman answered with a light salute and smile, for he was not endowed with the power of hating, or he might have indulged that bad power towards Carne; “but I fear that he has not found things to his liking.”

“What concern is that of yours? Your duty is to carry out my orders, to the utmost of your ability, and offer opinion, when asked for.”

The light-hearted Frenchman shrugged his shoulders. “My commanding officer is right,”

he said ; “ but the sea is getting up, and there will be wind, unless I mistake the arising of the moon. My commanding officer had better retire, until his commands are needed. He has been known to feel the effects of high tossing, in spite of his unequalled constitution. Is it not so, my Commander ? I ask, with deference, and anxiety.”

Carne, who liked to have the joke on his side only, swore at the moon and the wind, in clear English, which was shorter and more efficacious than French. He longed to say—“ try to keep me out of rough water ”—but his pride, and the fear of suggesting the opposite to this sailor who loved a joke, kept him silent, and he withdrew to his little cuddy, chewing a biscuit, to feed if it must be so the approaching malady.

“ We shall have some game, and a fine game too,” said Renaud Charron to himself, as he ordered more sail to be made ; “ Milord gives himself such mighty airs. We will take him to the cross-run off the Middle-bank, and offer him a basin through the key-hole. To make sea-sick an Englishman—for after all, what other is he ? —will be a fine piece of revenge for fair France.”

Widow Shanks had remarked with tender sorrow—more perhaps because she admired the young man, and was herself a hearty soul, than from any loss of profit in victualling him—that

“he was one of they folk as seems to go about their business, and do their jobs, and keep their skins as full as other people, without putting nort inside of them. She knew one of that kind before, and he was shot by the Coast-guard, and when they postmartyred him, an eel twenty foot long was found inside him, doubled up for all the world, like a love-knot. Squire Carne was of too high a family for that; but she would give a week’s rent, to know what was inside him.”

There was no little justice in these remarks, as is pretty sure to be the case with all good-natured criticism. The best cook that ever was roasted cannot get out of a pot more than was put in it; and the weight of a cask, as a general rule, diminishes if the tap is turned, without any redress at the bung-hole. Carne ran off his contents too fast, before he had arranged for fresh receipts; and all, who have felt what comes of that, will be able to feel for him in the result.

But a further decrease was in store for him now. As the moon arose, the wind got higher, and chopped round to one point north of west, raising a perkish head-sea, and grinning with white teeth against any flap of sails. The schooner was put upon the starboard tack, as near to the wind as she would lie, bearing so for the French coast more than the English, and

making for the Vergoyers, instead of the Varne, as intended. This carried them into wider water, and a long roll from the south-west crossing the pointed squabble of the strong new wind.

“General,” cried Charron, now as merry as a grig, and skipping to the door of Carne’s close little cabin, about an hour before midnight, “it would afford us pleasure, if you would kindly come on deck, and give us the benefit of your advice. I fear that you are a little confined down here, and in need of more solid sustenance. My General, arise; there is much briskness upon deck, and the waves are dancing beautifully in the full moon. Two sail are in sight, one upon the weather bow, and the other on the weather quarter. Ah, how superior your sea-words are to ours! If I were born an Englishman, you need not seek far for a successor to Nelson, when he gets shot, as he is sure to be not tardily.”

“Get out!” muttered Carne, whose troubles were faintly illuminated by a sputtering wick. “Get out, you scoundrel, as you love plain English. Go direct to the devil, only let me die in peace.”

“All language is excusable in those affected with the malady of the sea,” replied the Frenchman, dancing a little to encourage his friend. “Behold, if you would get up and do this, you

would be as happy inside as I am. But stay—I know what will ease you in an instant, and enable you to order us right and left. The indefatigable Sherray put a fine piece of fat pork in store, before we sailed; I have just had it cooked, for I was almost starving. It floats in brown liquor of the richest order, such as no Englishman can refuse. Take a sip of pure rum, and you will enjoy it surely. Say, my brave General, will you come and join me? It will cure any little disquietude down here."

With a pleasant smile Charron laid his hand on the part of his commander which he supposed to be blamable. Carne made an effort to get up and kick him, but fell back with everything whirling around, and all human standards inverted. Then the kindly Frenchman tucked him up, for his face was blue, and the chill of exhaustion striking into him. "I wish you could eat a little bit," said Charron gently; but Carne gave a push with his elbow. "Well, you'll be worse before you are better—as the old women say in your country. But what am I to do about the two British ships, for they are sure to be British, now in sight?" But Carne turned his back, and his black boots dangled from the rim of his bunk, as if there was nothing in them.

"This is going a little too far," cried

Charron ; “I must have some orders, my Commander. You understand that two English ships are manifestly bearing down upon us——”

“Let them come and send us to the bottom—the sooner the better ;” his commander groaned, and then raised his limp knuckles, with a final effort to stop his poor ears for ever.

“But I am not ready to go to the bottom, nor all the other people of our fourteen hands”—the Frenchman spoke now to himself alone—“neither will I even go to prison. I will do as they do at Springhaven, and doubtless at every other place in England. I will have my dish of pork, which is now just crackling—I am capable of smelling it even here—and I will give some to Sam Polwhele, and we will put heads together over it. To outsail friend Englishman is a great delight, and to outgun him would be still greater ; but if we cannot accomplish those, there will be some pleasure of outwitting him.”

Renaud Charron was never disposed to make the worst of anything. When he went upon deck again, to look out while his supper was waiting, he found no change, except that the wind was freshening and the sea increasing, and the strangers whose company he did not covet seemed waiting for no invitation. With a light wind he would have had little fear of giving them the go-by, or on a dark night he might

have contrived to slip between, or away from them. But everything was against him now. The wind was so strong, blowing nearly half a gale, and threatening to blow a whole one, that he durst not carry much canvas, and the full moon approaching the meridian now, spread the white sea with a broad flood of light. He could see that both enemies had descried him, and were acting in concert to cut him off. The ship on his weather-bow was a frigate, riding the waves in gallant style with the wind upon her beam, and travelling two feet for every one the close-hauled schooner could accomplish. If the latter continued her present course, in another half-league she would be under the portholes of the frigate.

The other enemy, though further off, was far more difficult to escape. This was a gun-brig, not so very much bigger than *La Liberté* herself—for gun-brigs in those days were very small craft—and for that very reason more dangerous. She bore about two points east of north from the greatly persecuted Charron, and was holding on steadily under easy sail, neither gaining much upon the chase, nor losing.

“Carry on as we are, for about ten minutes,” said Charron to his mate, Sam Polwhele; “that will give us period to eat our pork. Come then, my good friend, let us do it.”

Polwhele—as he was called to make believe that he and other hands were Cornishmen, whereas they were Yankees of the sharpest order, owing no allegiance, and unhappily no good-will to their grandmother—this man, whose true name was Perkins, gave the needful orders, and followed down. Charron could talk, like many Frenchmen, quite as fast with his mouth full as empty, and he had a man to talk to, who did not require anything to be said twice to him.

“No fear of me!” was all he said. “You keep out of sight, because of your twang. I’ll teach them a little good English, better than ever came out of Cornwall. The best of all English is not to say too much.”

The Captain and his mate enjoyed their supper, while Carne in the distance bore the pangs of a malady called *bulimus*, that is to say, a giant’s ravening for victuals, without a babe’s power of receiving them. For he was turning the corner of his sickness now, but prostrate and cold as a fallen stalactite.

“Aha! We have done well. We have warmed our wits up. One glass of what you call the grog; and then we will play a pleasant game with those Englishmen.” Carne heard him say it, and in his heart hoped that the English would pitch him overboard.

It was high time for those two to finish their supper. The schooner had no wheel, but steered—as light craft did then, and long afterwards—with a bulky ash tiller having iron eyes for lashing it in heavy weather. Three strong men stood by it now, obedient, yet muttering to one another, for another cable's length would bring them into danger of being run down by the frigate.

“All clear for stays !” cried Polwhele, under orders from Charron. “Down helm ! Helm's alee ! Steady so. Let draw ! Easy, easy ! There she fills !” And after a few more rapid orders, the handy little craft was dashing away, with the wind abaft the beam, and her head about two points north of east. “Uncommon quick in stays !” cried Polwhele, who had taken to the helm, and now stood there. “Wonder what Britishers will think of that ?”

The British ship soon let him know her opinion, by a roar, and a long streak of smoke blown toward him, as she put up her helm, to consider the case. It was below the dignity of a fine frigate to run after little smuggling-craft, such as she voted this to be ; and a large ship had been sighted from her tops down channel, which might afford her nobler sport. She contented herself with a harmless shot, and leaving the gun-brig to pursue the chase, bore away for more important business.

"Nonplussed the big 'un; shall have trouble with the little 'un," said Master Polwhele to his captain; "she don't draw half a fathom more than we do. No good running inside the shoals. And with this wind, she has the foot of us."

"Bear straight for her, and let her board us," Charron answered pleasantly. "Down with all French hands into the fore-part of the hold, and stow the spare foresail over them. Show our last bills of lading, and ask them to trade. You know all about Cheeseman; double his prices. If we make any cash, we'll divide it. Say we are out of our course, through supplying a cruiser that wanted our goods for nothing. I shall keep out of sight on account of my twang, as you politely call it. The rest I may safely leave to your invention. But if you can get any ready rhino, Sam Polwhele is not the man to neglect it."

"Bully for you!" cried the Yankee, looking at him with more admiration than he expected ever to entertain for a Frenchman. "There's five ton of cheeses that have been seven voyages, and a hundred firkins of Irish butter, and five-and-thirty cases of Russian tongues, as old as old Nick, and ne'er a sign of weevil! Lor' no, never a tail of weevil! Skipper, you deserve to go to heaven out of West-street. But how about him, down yonder?"

“Captain Carne? Leave him to me to arrange. I shall be ready, if they intrude. Announce that you have a sick gentleman on board, a passenger afflicted with a foreign illness, and having a foreign physician. *Mon Dieu!* It is good. Every Englishman believes that anything foreign will kill him with a vault. Arrange you the trading; and I will be the doctor—a German, I can do the German.”

“And I can do the trading,” the American replied, without any rash self-confidence; “any fool can sell good stuff; but it requireth a good man to sell bad goods.”

The gun-brig bore down on them, at a great pace, feeling happy certitude that she had got a prize; not a very big one, but still worth catching. She saw that the frigate had fired a shot, and believed that it was done to call her own attention to a matter below that of the frigate. On she came, heeling to the lively wind, very beautiful in the moonlight, tossing the dark sea in white showers, and with all her taut canvas arched and gleaming, hovered with the shades of one another.

“Heave to, or we sink you;” cried a mighty voice through a speaking trumpet, as she luffed a little, bringing her port broadside to bear; and the schooner, which had hoisted British colours, obeyed the command immediately. In a very

few seconds a boat was manned, and dancing on the hillocks of the sea; and soon, with some danger and much care, the visitors stood upon the *London Trader's* deck, and Sam Polwhele came to meet them.

"We have no wish to put you to any trouble," said the officer in command very quietly, "if you can show that you are what you profess to be. You sail under British colours; and the name on your stern is *London Trader*. We will soon dismiss you, if you prove that. But appearances are strongly against you. What has brought you here? And why did you run the risk of being fired at, instead of submitting to His Majesty's ship, *Minerva*?"

"Because she haven't got any ready money, Skipper, and we don't like three-months bills," said the tall Bostonian, looking loftily at the British officer. "Such things is nothing but piracy; and we had better be shot at than lose such goods as we carry, fresh shipped, and in prime condition. Come and see them, all with Cheeseman's brand, the celebrated Cheeseman of Springhaven—name guarantees the quality. But one thing, mind you—no use to hanker after them, unless you come provided with the ready."

"We don't want your goods. We want you;" answered Scudamore, now first Luff of

the brig-of-war *Delia*, and staring a little with his mild blue eyes at this man's effrontery. "That is to say, our duty is to know all about you. Produce your papers. Prove where you cleared from last, and what you are doing here, some thirty miles south of your course, if you are a genuine British trader."

"Papers all in order, sir. First-chop wafers, as they puts on now, to save sealing-wax. Charter-party, and all the rest. Last bills of lading from Gravesend, but you mustn't judge our goods by that. Bulk of them from St. Mary Axe, where Cheeseman hath freighted from these thirty years. If ever you have been at Springhaven, Captain, you'd jump at any thing with Cheeseman's brand. But have you brought that little bag of guineas with you?"

"Once more, we want none of your goods. You might praise them as much as you liked, if time permitted. Show me to the cabin, and produce your papers. After that we shall see what is in the hold."

"Super-cargo very ill in best cabin. Plague, or black fever, the German doctor says. None of our hands will go near him, but myself. But you won't be like that, will you?"

Less for his own sake than his mother's—who had none but him to help her—Scudamore dreaded especially that class of disease which

is now called “zymotic.” His father, an eminent physician, had observed and had written a short work to establish that certain families and types of constitution lie almost at the mercy of such contagion, and find no mercy from it. And among those families was his own. “Fly, my boy, fly,” he had often said to Blyth, “if you ever come near such subjects.”

“Captain, I will fetch them,” continued Mr. Polwhele, looking grave at his hesitation. “By good rights they ought to be smoked, I dare say; though I don’t hold much with such stuff myself. And the doctor keeps doing a heap of herbs hot. You can see him, if you just come down these few steps. Perhaps you wouldn’t mind looking into the hold, to find something to suit your judgment—quality combined with low figures there—while I go into the infected den, as the cleverest of my chaps calls it. Why it makes me laugh! I’ve been in and out, with this stand-up coat on, fifty times, and you can’t smell a flue of it, though wonderful strong down there.”

Scudamore shuddered, and drew back a little, and then stole a glance round the corner. He saw a thick smoke, and a figure prostrate, and another tied up in a long white robe, waving a pan of burning stuff in one hand, and a bottle in the other, and plainly conjuring Polwhele

to keep off. Then the latter returned quite complacently.

“Can’t find all of them,” he said, presenting a pile of papers big enough to taint Sahara ; “that doctor goes on as bad as opening a coffin. Says he understands it, and I don’t. The old figurehead! What does he know about it ?”

“Much more than you do, perhaps,” replied Blyth, standing up for the profession, as he was bound to do. “Perhaps we had better look at these on deck ; if you will bring up your lantern.”

“But, Captain, you will have a look at our hold, and make us a bid—we need not take it, any more than you need to double it,—for as prime a lot of cheese, and sides of bacon——”

“If your papers are correct, it will not be my duty to meddle with your cargo. But what are you doing, the wrong side of our fleet ?”

“Why that was a bad job ! There’s no fair trade now, no sort of dealing on the square nohow. We run all this risk of being caught by Crappos, on purpose to supply British ship *Gorgeous*, Sow-eastern station ; and blow me tight if I couldn’t swear she had been supplied chock-full by a Crappo ! Only took ten cheeses, and fifteen sides of bacon, though she never knew nought of our black fever case ! But, Captain, sit down here, and overhaul our flimsies. Not like rags, you know ; don’t hold plague much.”

The young lieutenant compelled himself to discharge his duty of inspection behind a combing, where the wind was broken ; but even so he took good care to keep on the weather side of the documents ; and the dates perhaps flew away to leeward. "They seem all right," he said, "but one thing will save any further trouble to both of us. You belong to Springhaven. I know most people there. Have you any Springhaven hands on board ? "

"I should think so ; send Tugwell aft, pass the word for Dan Tugwell. Captain, there's a family of that name there—settled as long as we have been at Mevagissey. Ah, that sort of thing is a credit to the place, and the people too, in my opinion."

Dan Tugwell came slowly, and with a heavy step, looking quite unlike the spruce young fisherman whom Scudamore had noticed as first and smartest in the rescue of the stranded *Blonde*. But he could not doubt that this was Dan,—the Dan of happier times and thoughts ; in whom, without using his mind about it, he had felt some likeness to himself. It was not in his power to glance sharply, because his eyes were kindly open to all the little incidents of mankind, but he managed to let Dan know that duty compelled him to be particular. Dan Tugwell touched the slouched hat upon his

head, and stood waiting to know what he was wanted for.

“Daniel,” said Scudamore, who could not speak condescendingly to any one, even from the official point of view, because he felt that every honest man was his equal, “are you here, of your own accord, as one of the crew of this schooner?”

Dan Tugwell had a hazy sense of being put upon an untrue balance. Not by this kind gentleman’s words, but through his own proceedings. In his honest mind he longed to say —“I fear I have been bamboozled. I have cast my lot in with these fellows, through passion, and in hasty ignorance. How I should like to go with you, and fight the French, instead of getting mixed up with a lot of things I can’t make out!”

But his equally honest heart said to him—“You have been well treated. You are well paid. You shipped of your own accord. You have no right to peach, even if you had anything to peach of; and all you have seen is some queer trading. None but a sneak would turn against his ship-mates, and his ship, when overhauled by the Royal Navy.”

Betwixt the two voices, Dan said nothing, but looked at the lieutenant with that gaze which the receiver takes to mean doubt of his

meaning, while the doubt more often is,—what to do with it.

“Are you here, of your own accord? Do you belong to this schooner of your own accord? Are you one of this crew, of your own free will?”

Scudamore rang the changes on his simple question, as he had often been obliged to do in the Grammar-school at Stonnington, with slow-witted boys, who could not, or would not, know the top from the bottom of a sign-post. “Do you eat with your eyes?” he had asked them sometimes; and they had put their thumbs into their mouths, to enquire.

“S’pose I am;” said Dan at last, assuming stupidity, to cover hesitation; “yes, sir, I come aboard of my own free will.”

“Very well. Then I am glad to find you comfortable. I shall see your father next week perhaps. Shall I give him any message for you.”

“No, sir! For God’s sake, don’t let him know a word about where you have seen me. I came away all of a heap, and I don’t want one of them to bother about me.”

“As you wish, Dan. I shall not say a word about you, until you return with your earnings. But if you found the fishing business dull, surely you might have come to us, Dan. Any volunteers here for His Majesty’s service?” Scuda-

more raised his voice, with the usual question. "Good pay, good victuals, fine promotion, and prize-money, with the glory of fighting for their native Country, and provision for life if disabled!"

Not a man came forward, though one man longed to do so; but his sense of honour, whether true or false, forbade him. Dan Tugwell went heavily back to his work, trying to be certain that it was his duty. But sad doubts arose as he watched the brave boat, lifting over the waves in the moonlight, with loyal arms tugging towards a loyal British ship; and he felt that he had thrown away his last chance.

CHAPTER XIV.

SHELFING THE QUESTION.

THERE is a time of day (as everybody must have noticed, who is kind enough to attend to things) not to be told by the clock, nor measured to a nicety by the position of the sun—even when he has the manners to say where he is—a time of day dependent on a multiplicity of things unknown to us (who have made our own brains, by perceiving that we had none, and working away till we got them) yet palpable to all those less self-exalted beings, who, or which, are of infinitely nobler origin than we, and have shown it, by humility. At this time of day, every decent and good animal feels an unthought of and untraced desire, to shift its position, to come out and see its fellows, to learn what is happening in the humble grateful world—out of which man has hoisted himself long ago, and is therefore a spectre to them—to breathe a little sample of the turn the world is taking, and sue their share of pleasure in the quiet earth and air.

This time is more observable, because it follows a period of the opposite tendency, a period of heaviness, and rest, and silence, when no bird sings and no quadruped plays, for about half an hour of the afternoon. Then suddenly, without any alteration of the light, or weather, or even temperature, or anything else that we know of, a change of mood flashes into every living creature, a spirit of life, and activity, and stir, and desire to use their own voice and hear their neighbour's. The usual beginning is to come out first into a place that cannot knock their heads, and there to run a little way, and after that to hop, and take a peep for any people around, and espying none—or only one of the very few admitted to be friends—speedily to dismiss all misgivings, take a very little bit of food, if handy (more as a duty to one's family than oneself, for the all-important supper-time is not come yet), and then if gifted by the Lord with wings—for what bird can stoop at such a moment to believe that his own grandfather made them?—up to the topmost spray that feathers in the breeze, and pour upon the grateful air the voice of free thanksgiving. But an if the blade behind the heart is still unplumed for flying, and only gentle flax, or fur, blows out on the wind, instead of beating it, does the owner of four legs sit and sulk, like a man

defrauded of his merits ? He answers the question with a skip and jump ; ere a man can look twice at him he has cut a caper, frolicked an intricate dance upon the grass, and brightened his eyes for another round of joy.

At any time of year almost, the time of day commands these deeds, unless the weather is outrageous ; but never more undeniably than in the month of April. The growth of the year is well established, and its manner beginning to be schooled by then ; childish petulance may still survive, and the tears of penitence be frequent ; yet upon the whole, there is—or used to be—a sense of responsibility forming, and an elemental inkling of true duty towards the earth. Even man (the least observant of the powers that walk the ground, going for the signs of weather to the cows, or crows, or pigs, swallows, spiders, gnats, and leeches, or the final assertion of his own corns) sometimes is moved a little, and enlarged by influence of life beyond his own, and tickled by a pen above his thoughts, and touched for one second by the hand that made him. Then he sees a brother man, who owes him a shilling, and his soul is swallowed up in the resolve to get it.

But well, in the sky-like period of youth, when the wind sits lightly, and the clouds go by in puffs, these little jumps of inspiration take

the most respectable young man sometimes off his legs, and the young maid likewise—if she continues in these fine days to possess such continuation. Blyth Scudamore had been appointed now, partly through his own good deserts, and wholly through good influence—for Lord St. Vincent was an ancient friend of the excellent Admiral Darling—to the command of the *Blonde*, refitted, thoroughly overhauled at Portsmouth, and pronounced by the dockyard people to be the fastest and soundest corvette afloat, and in every way a credit to the British navy. “The man that floated her shall float in her,” said the Earl, when somebody, who wanted the appointment, suggested that the young man was too young; “he has seen sharp service, and done sharp work. It is waste of time to talk of it; the job is done.” “Job is the word for it,” thought the other, but wisely reserved that great truth for his wife. However it was not at all a bad job for England. And Scudamore had now seen four years of active service, counting the former years of volunteering, and was more than twenty-five years old.

None of these things exalted him at all in his own opinion, or at any rate not very much. Because he had always regarded himself with a proper amount of self-respect, as modest men are almost sure to do, desiring less to know

what the world thinks of them than to try to think rightly of it for themselves. His opinion of it seemed to be that it was very good just now, very kind, and fair, and gentle, and a thing for the heart of man to enter into.

For Dolly Darling was close beside him, sitting on a very pretty bench, made of twisted oak, and turned up at the back and both ends, so that a gentleman could not get very far away from a lady, without frightening her. Not only in this way was the spot well adapted for tender feelings, but itself truly ready to suggest them, with nature and the time of year to help. There was no stream issuing here, to puzzle and perpetually divert the human mind (whose origin clearly was spring-water poured into the frame of the jelly-fish), neither was there any big rock, like an obstinate barrier rising ; but gentle slopes of daisied pasture led the eye complacently, sleek cows sniffed the herbage here and there, and brushed it with the under lip to fetch up the blades for supper-time, and placable trees, forgetting all the rudeness of the winter winds, began to disclose to the fond deceiving breeze, with many a glimpse to attract a glance, all the cream of their summer intentions. And in full enjoyment of all these doings, the poet of the whole stood singing—the simple-minded thrush, proclaiming that the world was good

and kind, but himself perhaps the kindest, and his nest, beyond doubt, the best of it.

“How lovely everything is to-day!” Blyth Scudamore spoke slowly, and gazing shyly at the loveliest thing of all in his opinion—the face of Dolly Darling. “No wonder that your brother is a poet.”

“But he never writes about this sort of thing,” said Dolly, smiling pleasantly. “His poems are all about liberty, and the rights of men, and the wrongs of war. And if he ever mentions cows or sheep, it is generally to say what a shame it is to kill them.”

“But surely it is much worse to kill men. And who is to be blamed for that, Miss Darling? The power that wants to overrun all the rest, or the Country that only defends itself? I hope he has not converted you to the worship of the new Emperor; for the army and all the great cities of France have begged him to condescend to be that; and the King of Prussia will add his entreaties, according to what we have heard.”

“I think anything of him!” cried Dolly, as if her opinion would settle the point. “After all his horrible murders,—worst of all of that very handsome and brave young man shot with a lantern, and buried in a ditch! I was told that he had to hold the lantern above his poor head, and his hand never shook! It makes me

cry, every time I think of it. Only let Frank come back, and he won't find me admire his book so very much. They did the same sort of thing, when I was a little girl, and could scarcely sleep at night on account of it. And then they seemed to get a little better, for a time, and fought with their enemies, instead of one another, and made everybody wild about liberty, and citizens, and the noble march of intellect, and the dignity of mankind, and the rights of labour—when they wouldn't work a stroke themselves—and the black superstition of believing anything, except what they choose to make a fuss about themselves. And thousands of people, even in this country, who had been brought up so much better, were foolish enough to think it very grand indeed, especially the poets, and the ones that are too young. But they ought to begin to get wiser now—even Frank will find it hard to make another poem on them."

"How glad I am to hear you speak like that! I had no idea—at least I did not understand—"

"That I had so much common sense?" enquired Dolly, with a glance of subtle yet humble reproach. "Oh yes, I have a great deal sometimes, I can assure you. But I suppose one never does get credit for anything without claiming it."

“I am sure that you deserve credit for everything that can possibly be imagined,” Scudamore answered, scarcely knowing, with all his own common sense to help him, that he was talking nonsense. “Every time I see you, I find something I had never found before to—to wonder at,—if you can understand—and to admire, and to think about, and to—to be astonished at.”

Dolly knew, as well as he did, the word he longed to use, but feared. She liked this state of mind in him, and she liked him too for all his kindness, and his humble worship; and she could not help admiring him for his bravery and simplicity. But she did not know the value yet of a steadfast and unselfish heart; and her own was not quite of that order. So many gallant officers were now to be seen at her father’s house, half a cubit taller than poor Blyth, and a hundred cubits higher in rank, and wealth, and knowledge of the world and the power of making their wives great ladies. Moreover she liked a dark man; and Scudamore was fair and fresh as a rose called *Hebe’s Cup* in June. Another thing against him was that she knew how much her father liked him; and though she loved her father well, she was not bound to follow his leadings. And yet she did not wish to lose this useful and pleasant admirer.

“I am not at all ambitious,” she replied,

without a moment's hesitation, for the above reflections had long been dealt with ; “ but how I wish I could do something to deserve even half that you say to me ! But I fear that you find the air getting rather cold. The weather is so changeable.”

“ Are you sure you are not ambitious ? ” Scudamore was too deeply plunged to get out of it now upon her last hint ; and to-morrow he must be far away. “ You have every right to be ambitious, if such a word can be used of you, who are yourself the height of so many ambitions. It was the only fault I could imagine you to have ; and it seems too bad that you should have none at all.”

“ You don’t know anything about it,” said Dolly, with a lovely expression in her face of candour, penitence, and pleasantry combined ; “ I am not only full of faults, but entirely made up of them. I am told of them too often, not to know.”

“ By miserably jealous and false people.” It was impossible to look at her and not think that. “ By people who cannot have a single atom of perception, or judgment or even proper feeling. I should like to hear one of them, if you would even condescend to mention it. Tell me one—only one, if you can think of it. I am not at all a judge of character ; but—but I

have often had to study it a good deal among the boys."

This made Miss Dolly laugh, and drop her eyes, and smooth her dress ; as if to be sure that his penetration had not been brought to bear on her. And the gentle Scuddy blushed at his clumsiness, and hoped that she would understand the difference.

" You do say such things ! " She also was blushing beautifully as she spoke, and took a long time before she looked at him again. " Things that nobody else ever says. And that is one reason why I like you so."

" Oh, do you like me—do you like me in earnest ? I can hardly dare to dream even for one moment— ”

" I am not going to talk about that any more. I like Mr. Twemlow, I like Captain Stubbard, I like old Tugwell—though I should have liked him better if he had not been so abominably cruel to his son. Now, I am sure it is time to go and get ready for dinner."

" Ah, when shall I dine with you again ? Perhaps never ; " said the young man, endeavouring to look very miserable and to inspire sadness. " But I ought to be very happy on the whole, to think of all the pleasures I have enjoyed, and how much better I have got on than I had any right in the world to hope for."

“Yes, to be the Commander of a beautiful ship, little more than a year from the date of your commission. Captain Stubbard is in such a rage about it.”

“I don’t mean about that—though that of course is rare luck—I mean a much more important thing; I mean about getting on well with you. The first time I saw you in that fine old school, you did not even want to shake hands with me, and you thought what a queer kind of animal I was; and then the first time or two I dined at the Hall, nothing but fine hospitality stopped you from laughing at my want of practice. But gradually, through your own kind nature, and my humble endeavours to be of use, I began to get on with you better and better; and now you are beginning almost to like me.”

“Not almost, but altogether,” she answered with quite an affectionate glance; “I can tell you there are very few, outside of my own family, that I like half so well as I like you. But how can it matter to you so much?”

She looked at him so that he was afraid to speak, for fear of spoiling everything; and being a very good-natured girl, and pleased with his deep admiration, she sighed—just enough to make him think that he might hope.

“We are all so sorry to lose you,” she said; “and no one will miss you so much as I shall,

because we have had such pleasant times together. But if we can carry out our little plot, we shall hear of you very often, and I dare say not very unfavourably. Faith and I have been putting our heads together, for our own benefit and that of all the house, if we can get you to second it. My father jumped at the idea, and said how stupid we were not to think of it before. You know how very little he can be at home this summer, and he says he has to sacrifice his children to his country. So we suggested that he should invite Lady Scudamore to spend the summer with us, if she can be persuaded to leave home so long. We will do our very utmost to make her comfortable, and she will be a tower of strength to us ; for you know sometimes it is very awkward to have only two young ladies. But we dare not do anything, until we asked you. Do you think she would take compassion upon us ? A word from you perhaps would decide her ; and Faith would write a letter for you to send."

Scudamore reddened with delight, and took her hand. "How can I thank you ? I had better not try ;" he answered, with some very tender play of thumb and finger, and a strong impulse to bring lips too into action. "You are almost as clever as you are good ; you will know what I mean without my telling you. My

mother will be only too glad to come. She knows what you are ; she has heard so much from me. And the reality will put to shame all my descriptions."

"Tell me what you told her I was like. The truth now, and not a word of afterthought, or flattery. I am always so irritated by any sort of flattery."

"Then you must let me hold your hands, to subdue your irritation ; for you are sure to think that it was flattery—you are so entirely ignorant of yourself, because you never think of it. I told my dear mother that you were the best, and sweetest, and wisest, and loveliest, and most perfect and exquisite, and innocent, and unselfish of all the human beings she had ever seen, or heard, or read of. And I said it was quite impossible for any one after one look at you to think of himself any more in this world."

"Well done!" exclaimed Dolly, showing no irritation, unless a gleam of pearls inside an arch of coral showed it. "It is as well to do things thoroughly, while one is about it. I can understand now how you get on so fast. But alas, your dear mother will only laugh at all that. Ladies are so different from gentlemen. Perhaps that is why gentlemen never understand them. And I would always a great deal rather be judged by a gentleman than a lady. Ladies pick such

a lot of holes in one another, whereas gentlemen are too large-minded. And I am very glad upon the whole that you are not a lady, though you are much more gentle than they make believe to be. Oh dear ! We must run ; or the ladies will never forgive us for keeping them starving all this time.”

CHAPTER XV.

LISTENERS HEAR NO GOOD.

“ Not that there is anything to make one so very uneasy,” said Mr. Twemlow, “ only that one has a right to know the meaning of what we are expected to put up with. Nothing is clear, except that we have not one man in the Government who knows his own mind, or at any rate dares to pronounce it. Addington is an old woman, and the rest—oh, when shall we have Pitt back again? People talk of it, and long for it; but the Country is so slow. We put up with everything, instead of demanding that the right thing shall be done at once. Here is Boney, a fellow raised up by Satan, as the scourge of this island for its manifold sins; and now he is to be the Emperor forsooth—not of France, but of Europe, continental Europe. We have only one man fit to cope with him at all, and the voice of the nation has been shouting for him; but who pays any attention to it? This state of things is childish—simply childish; or perhaps

I ought to say, babyish. Why even the children on the sea-shore know, when they make their little sand-walls against the tide, how soon they must be swept away. But the difference is this, that they don't live inside them, and they haven't got all that belongs to them inside them. Nobody can imagine for a moment that a clergyman's family would fail to know where to look for help, and strength, and support against all visitations ; but in common with the laity, we ask for Billy Pitt."

"And in another fortnight, you will have him ;" replied Captain Stubbard, who was dining there that day. "Allow me to tell you a little thing that happened to my very own self, only yesterday. You know that I am one of the last people in the world to be accused of any—what's the proper word for it ? Mrs. Stubbard, you know what I mean—Jemima, why the deuce don't you tell them ? "

"Captain Stubbard always has more meaning than he can well put into words," said his wife ; "his mind is too strong for any dictionary. Hallucination is the word he means."

"Exactly !" cried the Captain. "That expresses the whole of what I wanted to say, but went aside of it. I am one of the last men in the world, to become the victim of any—there, I've lost it again ! But never mind. You

understand now; or if you don't, Mrs. Stubbard will repeat it. What I mean is, that I see all things square, and straight, and with their own corners to them. Well, I know London pretty well; not, of course, as I know Portsmouth. Still, nobody need come along with me, to go from Charing Cross to St. Paul's Churchyard; and pretty tight I keep all my hatches battened down, and a sharp pair of eyes in the crow's-nest—for to have them in the foretop won't do there. It was strictly on duty that I went up—the duty of getting a fresh stock of powder, for guns are not much good without it; and I had written three times, without answer or powder. But it seems that my letters were going the rounds, and would turn up somewhere, when our guns were stormed, without a bit of stuff to make answer."

"Ah, that's the way they do everything now!" interrupted Mr. Twemlow. "I thought you had been very quiet lately; but I did not know what a good reason you had. We might all have been shot, and you could not have fired a salute, to inform the neighbourhood!"

"Well, never mind;" replied the Captain calmly; "I am not complaining, for I never do so. Young men might; but not old hands, whose duty it is to keep their situation in life. Well, you must understand that the air of

London always makes me hungry. There are so many thousands of people there, that you can't name a time when there is nobody eating, and this makes a man from the country long to help them. Anyhow, I smelted roast mutton at a place where a little side-street comes up into the Strand ; and, although it was scarcely half-past twelve, it reminded me of Mrs. Stubbard. So I called a halt, and stood to think upon a grating, and the scent became flavoured with baked potatoes. This is always more than I can resist, after all the heavy trials of a chequered life. So I pushed the door open, and saw a lot of little cabins, right and left of a fore-and-aft gangway, all rigged up alike for victualling. Jemima, I told you all about it. You describe it to the Rector and Mrs. Twemlow."

"Don't let us trouble Mrs. Stubbard," said the host ; "I know the sort of thing exactly, though I don't go to that sort of place myself."

"No, of course you don't. And I was a little scared at first, for there was sawdust enough to soak up every drop of my blood, if they had pistoled me. Mrs. Twemlow, I beg you not to be alarmed. My wife has such nerves, that I often forget that all ladies are not like her. Now don't contradict me, Mrs. Stubbard. Well, sir, I went to the end of this cock-pit—if you like to call it so—and got into the starboard berth,

and shouted for a ration of what I had smelled outside. And although it was far from being equal to its smell—as the character is of everything—you might have thought it uncommon good, if you had never tasted Mrs. Stubbard's cooking, after she had been to the butcher herself. Very well. I don't care for kickshaws, even if I could afford them, which has never yet been my destiny. So I called for another ration of hot sheep—beg your pardon, ladies, what I mean is mutton—and half a dozen more of baked potatoes; and they reminded me of being at home so much, that I called for a pint of best pine-apple rum, and a brace of lemons, to know where I was—to remind me that I wasn't where I couldn't get them."

"Oh, Adam!" cried Mrs. Stubbard, "what will you say next? Not on week-days, of course, but nearly every Sunday—and the samples of his powder in his pocket, Mr. Twemlow!"

"Jemima, you are spoiling my story altogether. Well, you must understand that this room was low, scarcely higher than the cabin of a fore-and-after, with no sky-lights to it, or windsail, or port-hole that would open. And so, with the summer coming on, as it is now—though a precious long time about it—and the smell of the meat, and the thoughts of the grog,

and the feeling of being at home again, what did I do but fall as fast asleep as the captain of the watch in a heavy gale of wind ! My back was to the light, so far as there was any, and to make sure of the top of my head, I fetched down my hat—the soft-edged one, the same as you see me wear on fine Sundays.

“ Well, I may have gone on in that way for an hour, not snoring, as Mrs. Stubbard calls it, but breathing to myself a little in my sleep, when I seemed to hear somebody calling me, not properly, but as people do in a dream ; ‘ Stoobar—Stoobar—Stoobar,’ was the sound in my ears, like my conscience hauling me over the coals in bad English. This made me wake up, for I always have it out with that part of me when it mutinies ; but I did not move more than to feel for my glass. And then I perceived that it was nothing more or less than a pair of Frenchmen talking about me in the berth next to mine, within the length of a marline-spike from my blessed ears, or the one the Lord has left me.

“ Some wiseacre says that listeners never hear good of themselves ; and upon my word lie was right enough this time, so far as I made out. The French language is beyond me, so far as speaking goes, for I never can lay hold of the word I want ; but I can make out most of what

those queer people say, from being a prisoner among them once, and twice in command of a prize-crew over them. And the sound of my own name pricked me up to listen sharply. You must bear in mind, Rector, that I could not see them, and durst not get up to peep over the quarter-rail, for fear of scaring them. But I was wearing a short hanger, like a middy's dirk--the one I always carry in the battery."

"I made Adam promise, before he went to London," Mrs. Stubbard explained to Mrs. Twemlow, "that he would never walk the streets without steel or fire-arms. Portsmouth is a very wicked place indeed; but a garden of Eden, compared with London."

"Well, sir," continued Captain Stubbard, "the first thing I heard those Frenchmen say was—'Stoobar is a stupid beast, like the ox that takes the prize up here, except that he has no claim to good looks, but the contrary—wholly the contrary.' Mrs. Stubbard, I beg you to preserve your temper; you have heard it three times, and you should now despise such falsehoods. 'But the ox has his horns, and Stoobar has none. For all his great guns there is not one little cup of powder.' The villains laughed at this, as a very fine joke, and you may well suppose that I almost boiled over. 'You have then the command of this beast Stoobar?' the

other fellow asked him, as if I were a jackass ; ' how then have you so very well obtained it ? ' ' In a manner the most simple. Our chief has him by the head and heels : by the head, by being over him ; and by the heels, because nothing can come in the rear, without his knowledge. Behold ! you have all.' ' It is very good,' the other villain answered ; ' but when is it to be, my most admirable Charron ? How much longer ? How many months ? ' ' Behold my fingers,' said the one who had abused me ; ' I put these into those, and then you know. It would have been already, except for the business that you have been employed upon in this black hole. Hippolyte, you have done well, though crookedly ; but all is straight for the native land. You have made this Government appear more treacherous in the eyes of France and Europe, than our own is ; and you have given a good jump to his instep for the saddle. But all this throws us back. I am tired of tricks ; I want fighting ; though I find them quite a jolly people.' ' I don't,' said the other, who was clearly a low scoundrel, for his voice was enough to settle that ; ' I hate them ; they are of thick head and thick hand, and would come in sabots to catch their enemy asleep. And now there is no chance to entangle any more. Their Government will be of the old brutal kind, hard knocks,

and no stratagems. In less than a fortnight Pitt will be master again. I know it from the very best authority. You know what access I have.' 'Then that is past ;' the other fellow answered, who seemed to speak more like a gentleman, although he was the one that ran down me ; 'that is the Devil ! They will have their wits again, and that very fat Stoobar will be supplied with powder. Hippolyte, it is a very grand joke. Within three miles of his head (which is empty, like his guns) we have nearly two hundred barrels of powder, which we fear to bring over in those flat-bottoms for fear of a volley among them. Ha, ha, Stoobar is one fine fat ox ! '

"This was all I heard, for they began to move, having had enough sugar and water, I suppose ; and they sauntered away to pay their bill at the hatch put up at the doorway. It was hopeless to attempt to follow them ; but although I am not so quick in stays as I was, I slewed myself round to have a squint at them. One was a slight little active chap, with dapper legs, and jerks like a Frenchman all over. I could pardon him for calling me a great fat ox, for want of a bit of flesh upon his own bones. But he knows more about me than I do of him ; for I never clapped eyes on him before, to my knowledge. The other was better built, and of some

substance, but a nasty slouchy-looking sort of cur, with high fur collars and a long gray cloak. And that was the one called Hippolyte, who knows all about our Government. And just the sort of fellow who would do so in these days, when no honest man knows what they are up to."

"That is true," said the Rector; "too true by half. But honest men soon will have their turn, if that vile spy was well informed. The astonishing thing is that England ever puts up with such shameful anarchy. What has been done to defend us? Nothing, except your battery, without a pinch of powder! With Pitt at the helm would that have happened? How could we have slept in our beds, if we had known it? Fourteen guns, and not a pinch of powder!"

"But you used to sleep well enough, before a gun was put there;" Mrs. Stubbard's right to spare nobody was well established by this time. "Better have the guns, though they could not be fired, than no guns at all, if they would frighten the enemy."

"That is true, Ma'am," replied Mr. Twemlow; "but until the guns came, we had no sense of our danger. Having taught us that, they were bound to act up to their teaching. It is not for ourselves that I have any fear. We

have long since learned to rest with perfect faith in the Hand that overruleth all. And more than that—if there should be a disturbance, my nephew, and my godson, Joshua, has a house of fourteen rooms in a Wiltshire valley, quite out of the track of invaders. He would have to fight, for he is Captain in the Yeomanry; and we would keep house for him till all was over. So that it is for my parish I fear, for my people, my schools, and my church, Ma'am.”

“ Needn’t be afraid, sir; no call to run away; ” cried the Captain of the battery, having now well manned his own portholes with the rector’s sound wine; “ we shall have our powder in to-morrow, and the French can’t come to-night, there is too much moon. They never dare show their noses nor’ard of their sands, with the man in the moon—the John Bull in the moon—looking at them. And more than that, why that cursed Boney—— ”

“ Adam, in Mr. Twemlow’s house! You must please to excuse him, all good people. He has sate such a long time, without saying what he likes.”

“ Jemima, I have used the right word. The parson will back me up in every letter of it, having said the same thing of him, last Sunday week. But I beg Mrs. Twemlow’s pardon, if I said it loud enough to disturb her. Well then,

this blessed Boney, if you prefer it, is a deal too full of his own dirty tricks for mounting the throne of the king they murdered, to get into a flat-bottomed boat at Boulogne ; and a long sight too jealous a villain he is, to let any one command instead of him. Why, the man who set foot upon our shore, and beat us—if such a thing can be supposed—would be ten times bigger than Boney in a month, and would sit upon his crown, if he gets one.”

“ Well, I don’t believe they will ever come at all ; ” the solid Mrs Stubbard pronounced with decision. “ I believe it is all a sham, and what they want is to keep us from attacking them in France. However, it is a good thing on the whole, and enables poor Officers, who have fought well for their Country, to keep out of the Workhouse with their families.”

“ Hearken, hearken to Mrs. Stubbard ! ” the veteran cried, as he patted his waistcoat—a better one than he could have worn, and a larger one than he would have wanted, except for the promised invasion. “ I will back my wife against any lady in the land for common sense, and for putting it plainly. I am not ashamed to say, thank God for the existence of that blessed Boney. All I hope is that he will only try to land at Springhaven—I mean, of course, when I’ve got my powder.”

“Keep it dry, Captain ;” said the Rector, in good spirits. “Your confidence makes us feel comfortable ; and of course you would draw all their fire from the village, and the houses standing near it, as this does. However, I pray earnestly every night, that they may attempt it in some other parish. But what was it you heard that Frenchman say, about two or three hundred barrels of powder, almost within three miles of us ? Suppose it was to blow up, where should we be ?”

“Oh, I don’t believe a word of that. It must be brag and nonsense. To begin with, there is no place where they could store it. I know all the neighbourhood, and every house in it. And there are no caves on this coast in the cliff, or holes of that kind, such as smugglers use. However, I shall think it my duty to get a search-order from Admiral Darling, and inspect large farm-buildings, such as Farmer Graves has got, and another man the other side of Pebbleridge. Those are the only places that could accommodate large stores of ammunition. Why, we can take only forty barrels in the fireproof magazine we have built. We all know what liars those Frenchmen are. I have no more faith in the 200 barrels of powder than I have in the 2,000 ships prepared on the opposite coast to demolish us.”

“ Well, I hope you are right,” Mr Twemlow answered; “ it does seem a very unlikely tale. But the ladies are gone. Let us have a quiet pipe. A man who works as hard as you and I do, is entitled to a little repose now and then.”

CHAPTER XVI.

ANSWERING THE QUESTION.

IF Seudamore had not seen Dan Tugwell on board of the *London Trader*, and heard from his own lips that he was one of her crew, it is certain that he would have made a strict search of her hold, according to his orders in suspicious cases. And if he had done this, it is probable that he never would have set his nimble feet on deck again, for Perkins (the American, who passed as Sam Polwhele) had a heavy ship-pistol in his great rough pocket, ready for the back of the young officer's head, if he had probed below the cheeses and firkins of butter. Only two men had followed the lieutenant from their boat, the rest being needed for her safety in the strong sea running, and those two at the signal would have been flung overboard, and the schooner (put about for the mouth of the Canche, where heavy batteries were mounted) would have had a fair chance of escape with a good start, while the gun-brig was picking up her boat. Unless,

indeed, a shot from the *Delia* should carry away an important spar, which was not very likely at night, and with a quick surf to baffle gunnery. However, none of these things came to pass, and so the chances require no measurement.

Carne landed his freight with his usual luck, and resolved very wisely to leave off that dangerous work, until further urgency. He had now a very fine stock of military stores for the ruin of his native land, and especially of gunpowder, which the gallant Frenchmen were afraid of stowing largely in their flat-bottomed craft. And knowing that he owed his success to moderation, and the good will of his neighbours towards evasion of the Revenue, he thought it much better to arrange his magazine than to add to it for a month or two.

Moreover he was vexed at the neglect of his advice, on the part of his arrogant Commander, a man who was never known to take advice from any mind external to his own body, and not even from that clear power sometimes, when his passionate heart got the uppermost. Carne, though of infinitely smaller mind, had one great advantage—he seldom allowed it to be curdled or crossed in its clear operations by turbulent bodily elements. And now, when he heard from the light-hearted Charron, who had lately been at work in London, that the only man they

feared was about to take the lead once more against the enemies of Great Britain, Caryl Carne grew bitter against his Chief, and began for the first time to doubt his success.

“I have a great mind to go to Mr. Pitt myself, tell him everything, and throw myself upon his generosity,” he thought as he sate among his ruins sadly; “I could not be brought to trial as a common traitor. Although by accident of birth I am an Englishman, I am a French Officer, and within my duty in acting as a pioneer for the French army. But then again, they would call me at the best a spy, and in that capacity outside the rules of war. It is a toss-up how they might take it, and the result would depend perhaps on popular clamour. The mighty Emperor has snubbed me. He is not a gentleman. He has not even invited me to Paris, to share in the festivities and honours he proclaims. I would risk it, for I believe it is the safer game; except for two obstacles, and both of those are women. Matters are growing very ticklish now. That old bat of a Stubbard has got scent of a rat, and is hunting about the farm-houses. It would be bad for him, if he came prowling here; that step for Inspectors is well contrived. Twenty feet fall on his head for my friend; even his bull-neck would get the worst of that. And then again, there is that

wretch of a Cheeseman, who could not even hang himself effectually. If it were not for Polly, we would pretty soon enable him, as the Emperor enabled poor Pichegru. And after his own *bonâ fide* effort, who would be surprised to find him *sus. per coll.*? But Polly is a nice girl, though becoming too affectionate. And jealous; good lack, a grocer's daughter jealous, and a Carne compelled to humour her! What idiots women are in the hands of a strong man! Only my mother—my mother was not; or else my father was a weak one; which I can well believe from my own remembrance of him. Well, one point at least shall be settled to-morrow."

It was early in May 1804, and Napoleon having made away to the best of his ability—which in that way was pre-eminent—with all possible rivals and probable foes, was receiving addresses, and appointing dummies, and establishing foolscap guarantees against his poor fallible and flexible self—as he had the effrontery to call it—with all the gravity, grand benevolence, confidence in mankind (as fools), immensity of yearning for universal good, and intensity of planning for his own, which have hoodwinked the public in every age, and never more than in the present age and country. And if France licked the dust, she could plead more than we can—it had not been cast off from her enemy's shoes.

Carne's love of liberty, like that of most people who talk very largely about it, was about as deep as beauty is declared to be ; or even less than that, for he would not have imperilled the gloss of his epiderm for the fair Goddess. So that it irked him very little, that his Chief had smashed up the Republic ; but very greatly that his own hand should be out in the cold, and have nothing put inside it, to restore its circulation. "If I had stuck to my proper line of work, in the Artillery, which has made his fortune"—he could not help saying to himself sometimes—"instead of losing more than a year over here, and perhaps another year to follow, and all for the sake of these dirty old ruins, and my mother's revenge upon this country, I might have been a General by this time almost—for nothing depends upon age in France—and worthy to claim something lofty and grand, or else to be bought off at a truly high figure. The little gunner has made a great mistake, if he thinks that his flat thumb of low breed can press me down shuddering, and starving, and crouching, just until it suits him to hold up a finger for me. My true course is now to consider myself, to watch events, and act accordingly. My honour is free to go either way, because he has not kept his word with me ; he promised to act upon my advice, and to land within a twelvemonth."

There was some truth in this, for Napoleon had promised that his agent's perilous commission in England should be discharged within a twelvemonth; and that time had elapsed without any renewal. But Carne was clear-minded enough to know that he was bound in honour to give fair notice, before throwing up the engagement; and that even then it would be darkest dishonour to betray his confidence. He had his own sense of honour still, though warped by the underhand work he had stooped to; and even while he reasoned with himself so basely, he felt that he could not do the things he threatened.

To a resolute man, it is a misery to waver; as even the most resolute must do sometimes; for instance the mighty Napoleon himself. That great man felt the misery so keenly, and grew so angry with himself for letting in the mental pain, that he walked about vehemently—as a horse is walked, when cold water upon a hot stomach has made colic—only there was nobody to hit him in the ribs, as the groom serves the nobler animal. Carne did not stride about in that style, to cast his wrath out of his toes; because his body never tingled with the sting-nettling of his mind—as it is bound to do with all correct Frenchmen—and his legs being long, he might have fallen down a hole into ancestral vaults, before he knew what he was up to. Being as he was,

he sate still, and thought it out, and resolved to play his own game for a while, as his master was playing for himself in Paris.

The next day, he reappeared at his seaside lodgings, looking as comely and stately as of old ; and the kind Widow Shanks was so glad to see him that he felt a rare emotion—good will towards her ; as the hardest man must do sometimes, especially if others have been hard upon him. He even chuckled little Susy under the chin, which amazed her so much that she stroked her face, to make sure of its being her own, and ran away to tell her mother that Pollyon was come home so nice. Then he ordered a special repast from John Prater's—for John, on the strength of all his winter dinners had now painted on his sign-board “Universal Victualler,” caring not a fig for the offence to Cheeseman, who never came now to have a glass with him, and had spoiled all the appetite inspired by his windows through the dismal suggestions of his rash act on the premises. Instead of flattening their noses and opening their mouths, and exclaiming, “Oh, shouldn't I like a bit of that !” the children, if they ventured to peep in at all, now did it with an anxious hope of horrors, and a stealthy glance between the hams and bacon, for something that might be hanging up among the candles. And the worst

of it was, that the wisest man in the village had failed to ascertain as yet “the reason why a’ doed it.” Until that was known, the most charitable neighbours could have no hope of forgiving him.

Miss Dolly Darling had not seen her hero of romance for a long time; but something told her—or perhaps somebody—that he was now at hand; and to make sure about it she resolved to have a walk. Faith was very busy, as the lady of the house, in preparing for a visitor, the mother of Blyth Scudamore, whom she with her usual kindness intended to meet and bring back from the coach-road that evening; for no less than three coaches a day passed now within eight miles of Springhaven, and several of the natives had seen them. Dolly was not to go in the carriage, because nobody knew how many boxes the visitor might bring, inasmuch as she was to stop ever so long. “I am tired of all this fuss,” cried Dolly; “one would think Queen Charlotte was coining, at the least; and I dare say nearly all her luggage would go into the door-pocket. They are dreadfully poor; and it serves them right, for being so dreadfully honest.”

“If you ever fall into poverty,” said Faith, “it will not be from that cause. When you get your money, you don’t pay your debts. You think that people should be proud to work for

you for nothing. There is one house I am quite ashamed to pass by with you. How long have you owed poor Shoemaker Stickfast fifteen shillings and sixpence? And you take advantage of him, because he dare not send it in to father!"

"Fashionable ladies never pay their debts," Dolly answered, as she spun round on one light heel, to float out a new petticoat that she was very proud of; "this isn't paid for, nor this, nor this; and you with your slow head have no idea how it adds to the interest they possess. If I am not allowed to have a bit of fashion in my dress, I can be in the fashion by not paying for it."

"It is a most happy thing for you, dear child, that you are kept under some little control. What you would do, I have not the least idea, if you were not afraid of dear father, as you are. The worst of it is that he is never here now, for as much as two days together. And then he is so glad to see us, that he cannot attend to our discipline, or take notice of our dresses."

"Ha! you have inspired me!" exclaimed Dolly, who rejoiced in teasing Faith. "The suggestion is yours, and I will act upon it. From the village of Brighton, which is growing very fine, I will procure upon the strictest credit a new Classic dress, with all tackle complete—as dear father so well expresses it—and then I will promenade me on the beach,

with Charles in best livery and a big stick behind me. How then will Springhaven rejoice, and every one that hath eyes clap a spy-glass to them! And what will old Twemlow say, and that frump of an Eliza, who condescends to give me little hints sometimes, about tightening up *so*, perhaps, and letting out *so*, and permitting a little air to come in *here*——”

“Do be off, you wicked little animal!” cried Faith, who in spite of herself could not help laughing, so well was Dolly mimicking Eliza Twemlow’s voice, and manner, and attitude, and even her figure, less fitted by nature for the Classic attire; “you are wasting all my time, and doing worse with your own. Be off, or I’ll take a stick to ‘e, as old Daddy Stakes says to the boys.”

Taking advantage of this state of things, the younger Miss Darling set forth by herself, to dwell upon the beauty of the calm May sea, and her own pretty figure glassed in tidal pools. She knew that she would show to the utmost of her gifts, with her bright complexion softly gleaming in the sun, and dark gray eyes through their deep fringe receiving and returning tenfold the limpid glimmer of the shore. And she felt that the spring of the year was with her, the bound of old Time that renews his youth and powers of going at any pace; when the desire of

the young is to ride him at full gallop, and the pleasure of the old is to stroke his nose and think.

Dolly, with everything in her favour, youth, and beauty, the time of year, the time of day, and the power of the place, as well as her own wish to look lovely, and to be loved beyond reason—nevertheless came along very strictly, and kept herself most careful not to look about at all. At any rate, not towards the houses, where people live, and therefore must look out. At the breadth of sea, with distant ships jotted against the sky like chips, or dotted with boats like bits of stick ; also at the playing of the little waves that ran at the bottom of the sands, just now, after one another with a lively turn, and then jostled into white confusion, like a flock of sheep huddled up and hurrying from a dog—at these and at the warm clouds loitering in the sun, she might use her bright eyes without prejudice. But soon she had to turn them upon a nearer object.

“ How absorbed we are in distant contemplation ! A happy sign, I hope, in these turbulent times. Miss Darling, will you condescend to include me in your view ? ”

“ I only understand simple English,” answered Dolly. “ Most of the other comes from France, perhaps. We believed that you were gone abroad again.”

“I wish that the subject had more interest for you ;” Carne answered, with his keen eyes fixed on hers, in the manner that half angered, and half conquered her. “My time is not like that of happy young ladies, with the world at their feet, and their chief business in it—to discover some new amusement.”

“You are not at all polite. But you never were that, in spite of your French education.”

“Ah, there it is again ! You are so accustomed to the flattery of great people, that a simple-minded person, like myself, has not the smallest chance of pleasing you. Ah, well ! It is my fate, and I must yield to it.”

“Not at all,” replied Dolly, who could never see the beauty of that kind of resignation, even in the case of Dan Tugwell. “There is no such thing as fate for a strong-willed man, though there may be for poor women.”

“May I tell you my ideas about that matter ? If so, come and rest for a moment, in a quiet little shelter, where the wind is not so cold. For there is no such thing as Spring in England.”

Dolly hesitated, and with the proverbial result. To prove himself more polite than she supposed, Caryl Carne, hat in hand and with low bows preserving a respectful distance, conducted her to a little place of shelter, so pretty and humble and secluded by its own want of art,

and simplicity of skill, that she was equally pleased and surprised with it.

“Why, it is quite a little bower!” she exclaimed; “as pretty a little nest as any bird could wish for. And what a lovely view towards the west and beyond Pebbleridge! One could sit here for ever, and see the sun set. But I must have passed it fifty times, without the least suspicion of it. How on earth have you managed to conceal it so? That is to say, if it is your doing. Surely the children must have found it out; because they go everywhere.”

“One brat did. But I gave him such a scare, that he never stopped roaring till next Sunday, and it frightened all the rest from looking round that corner. If any other comes, I shall pitch-plaster him, for I could not endure that noise again. But you see, at a glance, why you have failed to see it; as we always do with our little oversights, when humbly pointed out to us. It is the colour of the ground and the background too, and the grayness of the scanty growth that hides it. Nobody finds it out by walking across it, because of this swampy place on your side, and the shoot of flints down from the cliff on the other, all sharp as a knife, and as rough as a saw. And nobody comes down to this end of the warren, neither is it seen from the battery on the hill. Only from the back is it likely to be in-

vaded, and there is nothing to make people look, or come, up here. So you have me altogether at your mercy, Miss Darling."

Dolly thought within herself that it was much the other way, but could not well express her thoughts to that effect. And being of a brisk and versatile—not to say volatile—order, she went astray into a course of wonder concerning the pretty little structure she beheld. Structure was not the proper word for it at all; for it seemed to have grown from the nature around, with a little aid of human hands to guide it. Branches of sea-willow radiant with spring, and supple sprays of tamarisk recovering from the winter, were lightly inwoven and arched together, with the soft compliance of reed and rush from the marsh close by, and the stout assistance of hazel-rods from the westward cliff. The back was afforded by a grassy hillock, with a tuft or two of brake-fern throwing up their bronzy crockets among the sprayed russet of last year's pride. And beneath them a ledge of firm turf afforded as fair a seat as even two sweet lovers need desire.

"How clever he is, and how full of fine taste!" thought the simple-minded Dolly; "and all this time I have been taking him for a gloomy, hard-hearted, unnatural man. Blyth Scudamore never could have made this lovely bower."

In this conclusion she was altogether wrong. Scudamore could have made it, and would have made it gladly, with bright love to help him. But Carne never could, and would have scorned the pleasant task. It was Charron, the lively Frenchman, who with the aid of old Jerry, had achieved this pretty feat, working to relieve his dull detention, with a Frenchman's playful industry and tasteful joy in nature. But Carne was not likely to forego this credit.

"I think I have done it pretty well," he said, in reply to her smile of admiration; "with such scanty materials, I mean, of course. And I shall think I have done it very well indeed, if you say that you like it, and crown it with new glory, by sitting for a moment in its unpretentious shade. If your brother comes down, as I hope he will, next week, I shall beg him to come and write a poem here. The place is fitter for a poet, than a prosy vagabond, like me."

"It is very hard that you should be a—a wanderer I mean;" Dolly answered, looking at him with a sweet thrill of pity; "you have done nothing to deserve it. How unfairly fortune has always treated you!"

"Fortune could make me a thousand times more than the just compensation even now, if she would. Such a glorious return for all my bitter losses and outcast condition, that I should

—but it is useless to think of such things, in my low state. The fates have been hard with me; but never shall they boast, that they drove me from my pure sense of honour. Oh yes, it is damp! But let me cure it thus."

For Dolly, growing anxious about his meaning, yet ready to think about another proposal, was desirous to sit down on the sweet ledge of grass, yet uneasy about her pale blue sarsenet, and uncertain that she had not seen something of a little sea-snail (living in a yellow house, dadoed with red), whom to crush would be a cruel act to her dainty fabric. But if he was there, he was sat upon unavenged; for Carne pulling off his light buff cloak, flung it on the seat; after which the young lady could scarcely be rude enough not to sit.

"Oh, I am so sorry now! Perhaps it will be spoiled," she said; "for you say that the fates are against you always. And I am sure that they always combine against me, when I wear anything of that colour."

"I am going the wrong way to work," thought Carne. "What a little vixen it is; but what a beauty!" For his love for her was chiefly a man's admiration. And bodily she looked worthy now of all that could be done in that way, with the light flowing in through the budded arch, and flashing upon the sweet flush

of her cheeks. Carne gazed at her, without a word or thought; simply admiring, as he never had admired anything, except himself, till now. Then she felt all the meaning of his gaze, and turned away.

“But, you must look at me and tell me something,” he said in a low voice, and taking both her hands; “you shall tell me what my fate must be. Whether you can ever come to love me, as I have loved you, long and long.”

“You have no right to speak to me, like that,” she answered, still avoiding his eyes, and striving to show proper anger; “no gentleman would think of taking advantage of a lady so.”

“I care not what is right or wrong. Look up, and tell me that you hate me. Dolly, I suppose you do.”

“Then, you are quite wrong;” she gave him one bright glance of contradiction; “no, I have always been so sorry for you, and for all your troubles. You must not ask me to say more.”

“But I must; I must. That is the very thing that I must do. Only say that you love me, Dolly, darling, tell me that. Or let your lovely eyes say it for you.”

“My lovely eyes must not tell stories;” they were gazing softly at him now; “and I don’t think I can say it—yet.”

“But you will—you shall!” he exclaimed,

with passion growing as he drew her near ; “ you shall not slip from me, you shall not stir, until you have answered me one question—is there anybody else, my Dolly ? ”

“ You frighten me. You forget who I am. Of course there are a great many else, as you call it ; and I am not to be called for a moment, *your Dolly*.”

“ No, not for a moment; but for ever.” Carne was accustomed to the ways of girls, and read all their words by the light of their eyes. “ Your little heart begins to know who loves it, better than all the world put together. And for that reason, I will leave you now. Farewell, my darling ; I conquer myself, for the sake of what is worth a thousand of it.”

Dolly was in very sad confusion, and scarcely knew what she might do next—that is to say, if he still went on. Pleasant conceit, and bright coquetry ill supply the place of honest pride and gentle self-respect, such as Faith was blest with. Carne might have kissed Dolly a hundred times, without much resistance ; for his stronger will had mastered hers ; but she would have hated him afterwards. He did not kiss her once ; and she almost wished that he had offered one—one little tribute of affection (as the Valentines express it), as soon as he was gone, and the crisis of not knowing what to do was past. “ I

should have let him—I believe I should ; ” she reflected, sagely recovering herself ; “ but how glad I ought to be that he didn’t ! And I do hope he won’t come back again. The next time I meet him, I shall sink into the earth.”

For her hat had fallen off, and her hair was out of order, and she saw two crinkles near the buckle of her waist ; and she had not so much as a looking-glass to be sure that she looked nice again. With a heavy sigh for all these woes, she gathered a flossy bud of willow, and fixed it on her breast-knot, to defy the world ; and then without heed of the sea, sun, or sands, went home with short breath, and quick blushes, and some wonder ; for no man’s arm, except her father’s, had ever been round her waist till now.

CHAPTER XVII.

LITTLE AND GREAT PEOPLE.

IF ever a wise man departed from wisdom, or a sober place from sobriety, the man was John Prater, and the place Springhaven, towards the middle of June 1804. There had been some sharp rumours of great things before ; but the best people, having been misled so often, shook their heads without produce of their contents ; until Captain Stubbard came out in his shirt-sleeves one bright summer morning at half-past nine, with a large printed paper in one hand, and a slop-basin full of hot paste in the other. His second boy George, in the absence of Bob (who was now drawing rations at Woolwich), followed with a green baize apron on, and carrying a hearth-brush tied round with a string to keep the hair stiff.

“ Lay it on thick on the shutter, my son. Never mind about any other notices, except the one about young men wanted. No hurry ; keep

your elbow up ; only don't dab my breeches, nor the shirt you had on Sunday."

By this time there were half-a-dozen people waiting ; for this shutter of Widow Shanks was now accepted as the central board and official panel of all public business and authorised intelligence. Not only because all Royal Proclamations, Offers of reward, and Issues of menace, were posted on that shutter, and the one beyond the window (which served as a postscript and glossary to it), but also inasmuch as the kind-hearted Captain, beginning now to understand the natives—which was not to be done pugnaciously, as he had first attempted it, neither by any show of interest in them (than which they detested nothing more), but by taking them coolly, as they took themselves, and gradually sliding, without any thought about it, into the wholesome contagion of their minds, and the divine gift of taking things easily — our Captain Stubbard may be fairly now declared to have made himself almost as good as a native, by the way in which he comforted their content.

For nothing more sweetly disposed them than to hear of great wonders going on in other places —of battles, plague, pestilence, famine, and fire ; of people whose wives ran away with other people, or highwaymen stopping the coach of a

bishop. Being full of good nature, they enjoyed these things, because of the fine sympathies called out to their own credit, and the sense of pious gratitude aroused towards Heaven, that they never permitted such things among them.

Perceiving this genial desire of theirs, the stout Captain of the Foxhill battery was kind enough to meet it with worthy subjects. Receiving officially a London newspaper almost every other day, as soon as it had trodden the round of his friends, his regular practice was to cut out all the pieces of lofty public interest—the first-rate murders, the exploits of highwaymen, the episodes of high life, the gallant executions, the embezzlements of demagogues, in a word, whatever quiet people find a fond delight in ruminating—and these he pasted (sometimes upside down) upon his magic shutter. Springhaven had a good deal of education, and enjoyed most of all what was hardest to read.

But this great piece of news, that should smother all the rest, seemed now to take a terrible time in coming. All the gaffers were waiting, who had waited to see the result of Mr. Cheeseman's suicide, and their patience was less on this occasion. At length the great Captain unfolded his broadsheet, but even then held it upside down for a minute. It was below their dignity to do anything but grunt,

put their specs on their noses, and lean chin upon staff. They deserved to be rewarded, and so they were.

For this grand poster, which overlapped the shutters, was a Royal Proclamation, all printed in red ink, announcing that His Majesty King George the third would on the 25th of June then ensuing hold a grand review upon Shotbury Down of all the Volunteer forces and Reserve, cavalry, footmen, or artillery, of the four counties forming the South-east Division, to wit, Surrey, Kent, Sussex, and Hants. Certain regiments of the line would be appointed to act with them; and Officers in command were ordered to report at once, &c. &c. God save the King.

If Shotbury Down had been ten miles off, Springhaven would have thought very little of the matter; for no one would walk ten miles inland, to see all the Sojers that ever were shot, or even the “King, and Queen, and their fifteen little ones.” Most of the little ones were very large now; but the village had seen them in a travelling show, and expected them to continue like it. But Shotbury Down was only three miles inland; and the people (who thought nothing of twenty miles along the coast) resolved to face a league of perils of the solid earth, because if they only turned round upon their

trudge, they could see where they lived from every corner of the road. They always did all things with one accord; the fishing-fleet all should stand still on the sand, and the houses should have to keep house for themselves. That is to say, perhaps, all except one.

“ Do as you like,” said Mrs. Tugwell to her husband; “ nothing as you do makes much differ to me now. If you feel you can be happy with them thousands of young men, and me without one left, fit to lift a big crock, go your way, Zeb ; but you don’t catch me going, with the tears coming into my eyes, every time I see a young man to remind me of Dan—though there won’t be one there fit to stand at his side. And him perhaps fighting against his own King now ! ”

“ Whatever hath coom to Dan’el, is all along of your own fault, I tell ‘e.” Captain Tugwell had scarcely enjoyed a long pipe, since the night when he discharged his paternal duty, with so much vigour, and such sad results. Not that he felt any qualms of conscience, though his heart was sometimes heavy ; but because his good wife was a good wife no longer, in the important sphere of the pan, pot, and kettle, or even in listening to his adventures with the proper exclamations in the proper places. And not only she, but all his children, from Timothy

down to Solomon, instead of a pleasant chatter around him, and little attentions, and a smile to catch a smile, seemed now to shrink from him, and hold whispers in a corner, and watch him with timid eyes, and wonder how soon their own time would come to be lashed and turned away. And as for the women, whether up or down the road,—but as he would not admit, even to himself, that he cared twopence what they thought, it is useless to give voice to their opinions, which they did quite sufficiently. Zebedee Tugwell felt sure that he had done the right thing, and therefore admired himself; but would have enjoyed himself more, if he had done the wrong one.

“What fault of mine, or of his, poor lamb?” Mrs. Tugwell asked, with some irony. She knew that her husband could never dare to go to see the King without her,—for no married man in the place would venture to look at him twice, if he did such a thing,—and she had made up her own mind to go from the first; but still, he should humble himself, before she did it. “Was it I, as colted him? Or was it him as gashed himself, like the prophets of Baal, when a’ was gone hunting?”

“No, but you cockered him up, the same as was done to they, by the wicked king, and his wife—the worst woman as ever lived. If they

hadn't gashed theirselves, I reckon, the true man of God would a' done it for them, the same as he cut their throats into the brook Kishon. Solomon was the wisest man as ever lived, and Job the most patient—the same as I be—and Elijah, the Tishbite, the most justest."

" You better finish up with all the Psalms of David, and the Holy Children, and the Burial Service. No more call for Parson Tweinlow, or the new Churchwarden come in place of Cheeseman, because a' tried to hang his self. Zebedee Tugwell in the pulpit ! Zebedee, come round with the plate ! Parson Tugwell, if you please, areading out the ten commandments ! But 'un ought to leave out the sixth, for fear of spoiling 's own dinner afterwards ; and the seventh, if a' hopes to go to see King George the third, with another man's woman to his elbow ! "

" When you begins to go on like that," Captain Tugwell replied with some dignity, " the only thing as a quiet man can do, is to go out of houze, and have a half-pint of small ale." He put his hat on his head, and went to do it.

Notwithstanding all this, and much more, when the great day came for the Grand Review, very few people saw more of the King, or entered more kindly into all his thoughts—or rather, the thoughts that they made him think

—than Zebedee Tugwell and his wife Kezia. The place being so near home, and the smoke of their own chimneys, and masts of their smack as good as in sight—if you knew where to look—it was natural for them to regard the King as a stranger requiring to be taught about their place. This sense of proprietary right is strong in dogs, and birds, and cows, and rabbits, and everything that acts by nature's laws. When a dog sits in front of his kennel, fast chained, every stranger dog that comes in at the gate confesses that the premises are his, and all the treasures they contain ; and if he hunts about—which he is like enough to do, unless full of self-respect and fresh victuals—for any bones invested in the earth to ripen, by the vested owner, he does it with a low tail, and many pricks of conscience, perhaps hoping in his heart that he may discover nothing to tempt him into breach of self-respect. But now men are ordered, in this matter, to be of lower principle than their dogs.

King George the third, who hated pomp and show, and had in his blood the old German sense of patriarchal kingship, would have enjoyed a good talk with Zebedee and his wife Kezia, if he had met them on the downs alone ; but alas, he was surrounded with great people, and obliged to restrict himself to the upper order, with whom he had less sympathy. Zebedee perceiving this,

made all allowance for him, and bought a new Sunday hat the very next day, for fear of wearing out the one he had taken off to His Majesty, when His Majesty looked at him, and Her Majesty as well, and they manifestly said to one another, what a fine subject they had found. Such was loyalty, aye and Royalty, in those times that we despise.

But larger events demand our heed. There were forty thousand gallant fellows, from the age of fifteen upwards, doing their best to look like soldiers, and some almost succeeding. True it is that their legs and arms were not all of one pattern, nor their hats put on their heads alike — any more than the heads on their shoulders were — neither did they swing together, as they would have done to a good swathe of grass; but for all that, and making due allowance for the necessity they were under of staring incessantly at the King, any man who understood them would have praised them wonderfully. And they went about in such wide formation, and occupied so much of their native land, that the best-drilled regiment Napoleon possessed would have looked quite small among them.

“They understand furze,” said a fine young officer of the staff, who had ridden up to Admiral Darling’s carriage and saluted three ladies who

kept watch there ; “I doubt whether many of the Regular forces would have got through that brake half so well ; certainly not without double gaiters. If the French ever land, we must endeavour to draw them into furzy ground, and then set the Volunteers at them. No Frenchman can do much, with prickles in his legs.”

Lady Scudamore smiled, for she was thinking of her son, who would have jumped over any furze-bush there—and the fir-trees too, according to her conviction—Dolly also showed her very beautiful teeth ; but Faith looked at him gratefully.

“It is very kind of you, Lord Dashville, to say the best of us that you can find to say. But I fear that you are laughing to yourself. You know how well they mean ; but you think they cannot do much.”

“No, that is not what I think at all. So far as I can judge, which is not much, I believe that they would be of the greatest service, if the Country should unfortunately need them. Man for man, they are as brave as trained troops, and many of them can shoot better. I don’t mean to say that they are fit to meet a French army in the open ; but for acting on their flanks, or rear, or in a wooded country—however, I have no right to venture an opinion, having never seen active service.”

Miss Darling looked at him with some surprise, and much approval of his modesty. So strongly did most of the young officers who came to her father's house lay down the law, and criticise even Napoleon's tactics.

“How beautiful Springhaven must be looking now!” he said, after Dolly had offered her opinion, which she seldom long withheld; “the cottages must be quite covered with roses, whenever they are not too near the sea; and the trees at their best, full of leaves and blossoms, by the side of the brook that feeds them. All the rest of the coast is so hard and barren, and covered with chalk instead of grass, and the shore so straight and staring. But I have never been there at this time of year; how much you must enjoy it! Surely we ought to be able to see it, from this high ground somewhere.”

“Yes, if you will ride to that shattered tree,” said Faith, “you will have a very fine view of all the valley. You can see round the corner of Foxhill there, which shuts out most of it just here. I think you have met our Captain Stubbard.”

“Ah, I must not go now; I may be wanted at any moment;” Lord Dashville had very fine taste, but it was not the inanimate beauties of Springhaven that he cared a dash for; “and I fear that I could never see the roses there.

I think there is nothing in all nature to compare with a rose—except one thing."

Faith had a lovely moss-rose in her hat—a rose just peeping through its lattice at mankind, before it should open and blush at them—and she knew what it was that he admired more than the sweetest rose that ever gemmed itself with dew. Lord Dashville had loved her, as she was frightened to remember, for more than a year, because he could not help it; being a young man of great common sense, as well as fine taste, and some knowledge of the world. "He knows to which side his bread will be buttered," Mr. Swipes had remarked, as a keen observer. "If a' can only get Miss Faith, his bread 'll be buttered to both sides for life—his self to one side, and her to do the tother. The same as I told Mother Cloam—a man that knoweth his duty to head-gardeners, as his noble lordship doth, the same know the differ atwixt Miss Faith—as fine a young 'ooman as ever looked into a pink—and that blow-away froth of a thing, Miss Dolly."

This fine young woman, to use the words of Mr. Swipes, coloured softly, at his noble lordship's gaze, to the tint of the rosebud in her hat; and then spoke coldly, to countervail her blush.

"There is evidently something to be done

directly. All the people are moving towards the middle of the down. We must not be so selfish as to keep you here, Lord Dashville."

"Why, don't you see what it is?" exclaimed Miss Dolly, hotly resenting the part of second fiddle; "they are going to have the grand march-past. These affairs always conclude with that. And we are in the worst part of the whole down, for seeing it. Lord Dashville will tell us where we ought to go."

"You had better not attempt to move now;" he answered, smiling as he always smiled at Dolly, as if she were a charming but impatient child; "you might cause some confusion, and perhaps see nothing. And now, I must discharge my commission, which I am quite ashamed of having left so long. His Majesty hopes, when the march-past is over, to receive a march-up of fair ladies. He has a most wonderful memory, as you know, and his nature is the kindest of the kind. As soon as he heard that Lady Scudamore was here, and Admiral Darling's daughters with her, he said, 'Bring them all to me, every one of them; young Scudamore has done good work, good work. And I want to congratulate his mother about him. And Darling's daughters, I must see them. Why, we owe the security of the coast to him.' And so, if you please ladies, be quite

ready, and allow me the honour of conducting you."

With a low bow, he set off about his business, leaving the ladies in a state of sweet disturbance. Blyth Scudamore's mother wept a little, for ancient troubles and present pleasure. Lord Dashville could not repeat before her all that the blunt old King had said—"Monstrous ill-treated woman, shameful, left without a penny, after all her poor husband did for me and the children! Not my fault a bit—fault of the Whigs—always stingy—said he made away with himself—bad example—don't believe a word of it; very cheerful man. Blown by now, at any rate—must see what can be done for her—obliged to go for Governess—disgrace to the Crown!"

Faith, with her quiet self-respect, and the largeness learned from sorrow, was almost capable of not weeping that she had left at home her apple-green Poland mantlet and Jockey bonnet of lilac satin checked with maroon. But Dolly had no such weight of bygone sorrow to balance her present woe, and the things she had left at home were infinitely brighter than that dowdy Faith's.

"Is there time to drive back? Is there time to drive home? The King knows father, and he will be astonished to see a pair of frumps, and he won't understand one bit about the dust or the

sun that takes the colour out! He will think we have got all our best things on. Oh, Lady Scudamore, how could you do it? You told us to put on quite plain things; because of the dust, and the sun, and all that; and it might come to rain, you said—as if it was likely, when the King was on the hill! And with all your experience of the King and Queen, that you told us about, last evening, you must have known that they would send for us. Gregory, how long would it take you to go home, at full gallop, allow us half an hour in the house, and be back here again, when all these people are gone by?"

"Well, Miss, there be a steepish bit of road, and a many ockard cornders; I should say a' might do it in two hours and a half, with a fresh pair of nags put in, while you ladies be a'cleaning of yourselves, Miss. Leastways, if Hadmiral not object."

"Hadmiral, as you call him, would have nothing to do with it;" Dolly was always free-spoken with the servants, which made her very popular with some of them; "he has heavier duty than he can discharge. But two hours and a half is hopeless; we must even go, as we are."

Coachman Gregory smiled in his sleeve. He knew that the Admiral had that day a duty far beyond his powers—to bring up his Sea-Fencibles to see the King—upon which they had insisted

—and then to fetch them all back again, and send them on board of their several craft in a state of strict sobriety. And Gregory meant to bear a hand, and lift it pretty frequently towards the most loyal part of man, in the large festivities of that night. He smacked his lips, at the thought of this, and gave a little flick to his horses.

After a long time, long enough for two fair drives to Springhaven and back, and when even the youngest were growing weary of glare and dust, and clank, and din, and blare, and roar, and screeching music, Lord Dashville rode up through a cloud of roving chalk, and after a little talk with the ladies, ordered the coachman to follow him. Then stopping the carriage at a proper distance, he led the three ladies towards the King, who was thoroughly tired, and had forgotten all about them. His Majesty's sole desire was to get into his carriage and go to sleep; for he was three score years and six of age, and his health not such as it used to be. Ever since twelve o'clock, he had been sitting in a box made of feather-edged boards, which the newspapers called a pavilion, having two little curtains (both of which stuck fast) for his only defence against sun, noise, and dust. Moreover, his seat was a board full of knots, with a strip of thin velvet thrown over it; and Her

Majesty sitting towards the other end (that the public might see between them), and weighing more than he did, every time she jumped up, he went down, and every time she plumped down, he went up. But he never complained, and only slowly got tired. "Thank God!" he said gently, "it's all over now. My dear, you must be monstrous tired; and scarcely a bit to eat all day. But I locked some in the seat-box this morning—no trusting anybody but oneself. Let us get into the coach and have at them."

"Ja, ja, mein Herr," said the Queen.

"If it please your Majesties;" a clear voice entered between the bonnet-hoods of the curtains, "here are the ladies, whose attendance I was ordered to require."

"Ladies! What ladies?" asked King George, rubbing his eyes, and yawning. "Oh yes, to be sure! I mustn't get up so early to-morrow. Won't take a minute, my dear. Let them come. Not much time to spare."

But as soon as he saw Lady Scudamore, the king's good nature overcame the weariness of the moment. He took her kindly by the hand, and looked at her face, which bore the mark of many heavy trials; and she who had often seen him, when the world was bright before her, could not smother one low sob, as she thought of all that had been since.

“Don’t cry, don’t cry, my dear,” said the King, with his kind heart showing in his eyes; “we must bow to the will of the Lord, who gives sad trials to every one of us. We must think of the good, and not the evil. Bless me, keep your spirits up. Your son is doing very well indeed, very well indeed, from all I hear. Good chip of the block, very good chip. Will cure my grandchildren, as soon as they want it; and nobody is ever in good health now.”

“No, your Majesty, if you please, my son is in the Royal Navy, fighting for his Country, and his King. And he has already captured——”

“Three French frigates. To be sure, I know. Better than curing three hundred people. Fine young officer—very fine young officer. Must come to see me when he gets older. There, you are laughing! That’s as it should be. Good-bye, young ladies. Forty miles to go to-night, and very rough roads—very rough indeed. Monstrous pretty girls! Uncommon glad that George wasn’t here to see them. Better stay in the country—too good for London. Must be off; sha’n’t have a bit of sleep to-night, because of sleeping the whole way there, and then sure to be late in the morning, not a bit of breakfast till eight o’clock, and all the day thrown upside down! Darlings, Darlings—the right name for them! But they mustn’t

come to London. No, no, no. Too much wickedness there already. Very glad George wasn't here to-day!"

His Majesty was talking, as he always did, with the firm conviction that his words intended for the public ear would reach it; while those addressed, without change of tone, to himself would be strictly private. But instead of offending any one, this on the whole gave great satisfaction, and impressed nine people out of ten with a strong and special regard for him. Because almost every one supposed himself to be admitted, at first sight, to the inner confidence of the King. And to what could he attribute this? He would do his own merits great demerit, unless he attributed it to them, and to the king an unusual share of sagacity in perceiving them.

CHAPTER XVIII.

DOWN AMONG THE DEAD MEN.

THAT grand review at Shotbury was declared by all who took part in it, or at all understood the subject, to have been a most remarkable and quite unparalleled success. Not only did it show what noble stuff there is in Englishmen, and how naturally they take to arms, but also it inspired with martial feeling and happy faith the wives and mothers of all the gallant warriors there. It would make the blood-stained despot cower upon his throne of murder, and teach him the madness of invading any land so fortified.

However, Napoleon failed to see the matter in that wholesome light, and smiled a grim and unkind smile, as he read Caryl Carne's report of those "left-handed and uncouth manœuvres." "One of your Majesty's feeblest regiments would send the whole of those louts to the devil; and I am bound to impress once more, with all deference to your infallible judgment, the vast importance of carrying out your grand designs at the first

moment. All is prepared on my part. One day's notice is all I need."

So wrote Carne; and perhaps the truth, as usual, lay about half-way between the two opinions. Even Carne was not admitted to a perfect knowledge of his master's schemes. But to keep things moving and men alert, the Emperor came to the coast at once, busy as he was in Paris, and occupied for several weeks, with short intervals of absence, the house prepared for him near Boulogne, whence he watched and quickened the ripening of his mighty plans against us.

Now Carne himself, while working with new vigour and fresh enterprise, had a narrow escape from invasion. Captain Stubbard, stirred up now and again by Mr. Twemlow, had thoroughly searched all covered places, likely to harbour gunpowder, within at least six miles of his fort, that is to say all likely places, save and except the right one. By doing this, he had done for himself—as regards sweet hospitality—among all the leading farmers, maltsters, tanners, and millers, for miles around. Even those whose premises were not entered, as if they had been Frenchmen, had a brother-in-law, or at least a cousin, whose wooden bars had been knocked up. And the most atrocious thing of all, if there could be anything worse than worst, was

that the Captain dined one day, at a market-ordinary, with Farmer, or you might say Squire Hanger—for the best part of his land followed to him from his father—and had rum and water with him, and spoke his health, and tucked Mrs. Hanger up into the shay, and rode alongside to guarantee them ; and then the next day, on the very same horse, up he comes at Hanger-dene, and overhauls every tub on the premises, with a parchment as big as a malt-shovel ! Such a man was not fit to lay a knife and fork by.

Some sense of the harm he had done to himself, without a bit of good to any one, dwelt heavily in the Captain's mind, as he rode up slowly, upon the most amiable of the battery-horses—for all sailors can ride, from long practice on the waves—and struck a stern stroke, with a stick like a linstock, upon the old shutter, that served for a door, and the front entrance to Carne Castle. There used to be a fine old piece of workmanship in solid and bold oak here, a door divided in the middle—else no man might swing it back—and even so pierced with a wicket, for small people to get through. That mighty door was not worn out, for it was not three hundred years old yet, and therefore scarcely in middle life ; but the mortgagees who had sacked the place of all that was worth a sack to hold it, these had a very fine offer for that door, from

a rich man come out of a dust-bin. And this was one of the many little things that made Caryl Carne unpleasant.

“I do not require production of your warrant. The whole place is open to your inspection ;” said Carne, who had long been prepared for this visit ; “open to all the winds and rains, and the lower part sometimes filled with water. The upper rooms, or rather the few that remain of them, are scarcely safe for a person of any weight to walk in, but you are most welcome to try them, if you like ; and this gentleman, I think might not fall through. Here are my quarters ; not quite so snug as my little room at the widow’s ; but I can offer you some bread and cheese, and a glass of country cider. The vaults or cellars have held good wine in their time, but only empty casks and broken bottles now.”

Captain Stubbard had known for many years the silent woes of poverty, and now he observed with some good will the young man’s sad but haughty smile. Then he ordered his young subaltern, his battery-mate as he called him, to ascend the broad crumbling staircase, and glance into the dismantled chambers, while himself with the third of the party—a trusty old gunner—should inspect the cellarage.

“We will not keep you long, sir,” he said to Carne ; “and if you are kind enough to show

us the way, which is easily lost in a place of this kind, we shall be all the quicker. Wilkins, when you have done up there, wait here for us. Shall we want a light, sir?"

"In the winter, you could hardly do without one, but at this time of year, I think you may. At any rate I will bring a lantern, and we can light it if wanted. But the truth is that I know next to nothing of those sepulchral places. They would not be very tempting, even without a ghost, which they are said to have."

"A ghost!" cried the Captain; "I don't like that. Not that I have much faith in them; although one never can be sure. But at this time of day—what is it like?"

"I have never seen her, and am quite content without it. It is said to be an ancestress of mine, a Lady Cordelia Carne, who was murdered, when her husband was away, and buried down there, after being thrown into the moat. The old people say that whenever her ghost is walking, the water of the moat bursts in and covers the floor of the vaults, that she may flit along it, as she used to do. But of course one must not listen to that sort of fable."

"Perhaps you will go in front, sir, because you know the way. It is my duty to inspect these places; and I am devilish sorry for it; but my duty must be done."

“ You shall see every hole and corner, including the stone that was put up to commemorate her murder and keep her quiet. But I should explain that these vaults extend for the entire length of the building, except just in the middle where we now stand. For a few yards the centre of the building seems to have never been excavated, as to which you will convince yourself. You may call the cellars east and west, or right and left, or north and south, or uphill and downhill, or anything else, for really they are so much alike, and partitioned into cells so much alike, that I scarcely know which is which myself, coming suddenly from the daylight. But you understand those things much better. A sailor always knows his bearings. This leads to the entrance of one set.”

Carne led the Captain and old Gunner Bob—as he was called in the battery—along a dark and narrow passage, whose mouth was browsed with ivy. Half-way through, they found an archway on the right-hand side, opening at right angles into long and badly lighted vaults. In this arch there was no door; but a black step-ladder (made of oak, no doubt), very steep and rather rickety, was planted to tempt any venturesome foot.

“ Are you sure this ladder is safe?” the Captain was by no means in love with the look

of it. “ My weight has increased remarkably in the fine air of Springhaven. If the bottom is rotten, the top won’t help us.”

“ Let me go first. It is my duty, as the owner; and I have no family dependent on me. My neck is of no value, compared to yours, Captain.”

“ How I have mistaken this young man ! ” thought the brave yet prudent Stubbard. “ I called him a Frenchified fool, whereas he is a downright Englishman ! I shall ask him to dinner next week, if Jemima can get a new leg for the dripping-pan.”

Following warily with Gunner Bob behind him, and not disdaining the strong arm of the owner, the Captain of Foxhill was landed in the vault, and being there made a strict examination. He even poked his short sword into the bungholes of three or four empty barrels, that Bob might be satisfied also in his conscience. “ Matter of form,” he said, “ matter of form, sir, when we know who people are; but you might have to do it yourself, sir, if you were in the service of your King. You ought to be that, Mr. Carne; and it is not too late, in such days as these are, to begin. Take my advice—such a fine young man ! ”

“ Alas, my dear sir, I cannot afford it. What officer can live upon his pay, for a generation ? ”

“Gospel truth!” cried the Captain warmly; “Gospel truth; and more than that—he must be the last of his generation, or else send his young ‘uns to the workhouse. What things I could tell you, Mr. Carne! But here we are at the end of the vaults, all empty, as I can certify; and I hope, my dear sir, that you may live to see them filled with good wine, as they used to be.”

“Thank you, but there is no hope of that. Shall we take the vaults of the other end next, or examine the chapel, and the outer buildings—outer ruins, I should say?”

“Oh, a little open air first, for goodness’ sake!” said the Captain, going heavily up the old steps; “I am pretty nearly choked with all this mildew. A little fresh air, before we undertake the other lot.”

As soon as the echo of their steps was dead, Charron, old Jerry, and another man jumped down from a loophole into the vault they had left, piled up a hoarding at the entrance, and with a crowbar swung back a heavy oak hatch in the footings of the outer wall. A volume of water poured in from the moat, or rather from the stream, which had once supplied it. Seeing this, they disappeared with a soft and pleasant chuckle.

The owner kept Stubbard such a time among the ruins, telling him some fine old legends, and

otherwise leading him in and out, that when a bit of food and a glass of old Cognac was proposed by way of interlude, the Captain heartily embraced the offer. Then Carne conducted his three visitors, for Wilkins had now rejoined them, into a low room poorly furnished, and regaled them beyond his promise. "Rare stuff!" exclaimed Stubbard, with a wink at Carne. "Ah, I see that free-trade still exists. No concern of mine, except to enjoy its benefits. Here's to your very good health, sir, and I am proud to have made your acquaintance."

"Have another drop; it can hurt no one;" Carne replied, and the Captain acquiesced.

"Well, I suppose we must finish our job;" the official visitor at length pronounced; "a matter of form, sir, and no offence; but we are bound to carry out our duty. There is nothing left, except the other lot of vaults; but the light begins to fail us, for underground work. I hope they are not so dark as those we have been through."

"Just about the same. You would hardly know one set from the other, as I told you, except for the stone that records the murder. Perhaps we had better light the lantern now."

"By all means. I don't half like that story of the lady that walks on the water. It does seem so gashly and unchristian altogether. Not

that I have any fear of ghosts—not likely, for I have never even seen one."

"I have ;" said Gunner Bob in a deep voice, which made them all; glance through the ivy. "I have, and a fearful one it were."

"Don't be a fool, Bob ;" the Captain whispered ; "we don't want to hear about that now. Allow me to carry the lantern, Mr. Carne ; it throws such shadows from the way you hold it. Why, surely, this is where we were before !"

"You might easily fancy so," Carne answered smiling, "especially with a mind at all excited— —"

"My mind is not excited, sir, not at all excited ; but as calm as it ever was in all its life."

"Then two things will show you, that these are the other vaults. The arch is on your left hand, instead of on your right"—he had brought them in now from the other end of the passage,—"and this entrance, as you see, has a door in it, which the other had not. Perhaps the door is to keep the ghost in"—his laugh sounded hollow, and like a mocking challenge along the dark roof—"for this is the part she is supposed to walk in. But so much for the door ! The money-lenders have not left us a door that will stand a good kick. You may find our old doors in Wardour Street."

As he spoke, he set foot against the make-

shift door, and away it went, as he had predicted. Crashing on the steps as it fell, it turned over, and a great splash arose at the bottom.

“Why, bless my heart, there is a flood of water there!” cried Stubbard, peeping timidly down the steps, on which (if the light had been clear, and that of his mind in the same condition) he might have seen the marks of his own boots. “A flood of water, perhaps six feet deep! I could scarcely have believed, but for that and the door, that these were not the very vaults that we have examined. But what business has the water there?”

“No business at all, any more than we have,” Carne answered with some rudeness, for it did not suit him to encourage too warmly the friendship of Captain Stubbard; “but I told you that the place becomes covered with water, whenever the ghost intends to walk. Probably there is not more than a foot of water”—there was in fact about three inches—“and as you are bound to carry out your duty——”

“My dear sir, I am satisfied, perfectly satisfied. Who could keep gunpowder under water, or even in a flooded cellar? I shall have the greatest pleasure in reporting that I searched Carne Castle—not of course suspiciously, but narrowly, as we are bound to do, in execution of our warrant——”

“If you would not mind looking in this direction,” whispered Carne, who could never be contented, “I think I could show you, just beyond the murder-stone—yes, and it seems to be coming towards us, as white as a winding sheet; do come and look.”

“No, sir, no; it is not my duty”—the Captain turned away, with his hair upon the rise—“I was sent here to look for saltpetre, not spectres. No officer in His Majesty’s service can be expected—Bob, and Wilkins, are you there?”

“Yes, sir, yes—we have had quite enough of this; and unless you give the orders——”

“Here she comes, I do declare!” whispered Carne, with extraordinary calmness.

“Bob, and Wilkins, give me one arm each. Make for daylight in close order. You may be glad to see your grandmother, young man; but I decline to have anything to say to her. Bob, and Wilkins, bear a hand; I feel a little shaky in my lower timbers. Run, for your lives, but don’t leave me behind. Run, lads, like the very devil.” For a groan of sepulchral depth, and big enough to lift a granite tombstone, issued from the vault, and wailed along the sombre archway. All the artillerymen fled, as if the muzzle of their biggest gun was slewed upon them, and very soon the sound of horses’ heels,

urged at a perilous pace down the hill, rang back as the echo of that grand groan.

“I think I did that pretty well, my Captain,” cried Charron, ascending from the vault with dripping boots; “I deserve a glass of cognac, if they have left me any. Happy is Stoobar that he was contented, without breaking his neck at the Inspector’s step.”

“He has satisfied his conscience,” Carne answered grimly; “yet it cannot be blameless, to make him run so fast. I am glad we have been saved from killing them. It would have been hard to know what to do next. But he will never trouble us here again.”

CHAPTER XIX.

FATHER, AND CHILD.

“TELL Miss Faith, when she comes in, that I shall be glad to see her;” said Admiral Darling to his trusty butler, one hot afternoon in August. He had just come home from a long rough ride, to spend at least one day in his own house, and after overhauling his correspondence, went into the dining-room, as the coolest in the house, to refresh himself a little with a glass of light wine, before going up to dress for dinner. There he sat in an arm-chair, and looked at his hands, which were browned by the sun, and trembling from a long period of heavy work and light sleep. He was getting too old to endure it with impunity, yet angry with himself for showing it. But he was not thinking of himself alone.

“I hope she will be sensible,” he was talking to himself, as elderly people are apt to do, especially after being left to themselves; “I hope she will see the folly of it—of living all her

life, as the bride of a ghost; and herself such a beautiful, cheerful darling! Loving, warm-hearted, sweet-tempered, adoring children, and adored by them; obedient, gentle—I can't think of anything good that she hasn't got, except common sense. And even for that, I like her all the more; because it is so different from all the other girls. They have got too much—one lover out of sight, even for a month or two, gone fighting for his Country, what do they do but take up with another, as I very greatly fear our Dolly would? But Faith—why, my darling, how well you look!"

"How I wish that I could say the same of you, dear father!" said the lovely young woman, while kissing him, and smoothing with her soft hand his wrinkled forehead; "you never used to have these little tucks and gathers here. I would rather almost that the French should come and devour us all, than see my father, whenever we do see him, once in a month say, gauffed like this—as their laundresses do it—and getting reduced to the Classical shape, so that I can put one arm round him."

"My darling," said the Admiral, though proud at heart of the considerable reduction of his stomach; "you should not say such things to me, to remind me how very old I am!"

Fathers are crafty, and daughters childish,

as behoves the both of them. The Admiral knew, as well as if he had ordered it, what Faith would do. And she must have perceived his depth, if only she had taken a moment to think of it. Because when she plumped, like a child, into his arms, how came his arms to be so wide open; and when two great tears rolled down her cheeks, how sprang his handkerchief, so *impromptu*, out from beneath his braided lappet?

“Tell me what harm I have done,” she asked, with a bright smile dawning through the dew of her dark eyes, “what have I done to vex you, father, that you say things fit to make me cry? And yet, I ought to laugh, because I know so well that you are only fishing for compliments. You are getting so active, that I shall be frightened to go for a walk or ride with you. Only I do love to see you look fat, and your darling forehead smooth and white.”

“My dear child, I must get up my substance. This very day, I begin in earnest. Because I am to be a great man, Faith. How would you like to have to call me ‘Sir Charles’?”

“Not at all, darling; except when you deserve it, by being cross to me; and that never, never happens. I wish there was more chance of it.”

“Well, dear, if you won’t, the other people must; for His Majesty has been graciously

pleased to turn me into a baronet. He says that I have earned it, and perhaps I have; at any rate, he put it so nicely, that without being churlish, I could not refuse. And it will be a good thing for Frank, I hope, by bringing him back from his democratic stuff. To myself it is useless; but my children ought to like it."

"And so they will, father, for your own dear sake. Let me be the first to salute you, father. Oh, Dolly will be in such a rage, because you told me, without telling her!"

"I never thought of that," said the Admiral simply; "I am afraid that I shall get in for it. However, I have a right to please myself, and you need not tell her, until I do. But that is not all my news, and not by any means the best of it. The King was reminded, the other day, of all that he and his family owe to the late Sir Edmond Scudamore, and better late than never he has ordered your Governess, as he called her, to be put on the list for a pension of £300 a year. Nothing that once gets into his head can ever be got out of it, and he was shocked at seeing his old physician's widow 'gone out as a Governess, gone out as a Governess—great disgrace to the royal family!' I am very glad that it happened so."

"And so am I. She ought to have had it long and long ago, especially after the sad mis-

fortune of her husband. You will let me tell her? It will be such a pleasure."

"Certainly, my dear; you are the very one to do it. Tell her that her eldest pupil is come with a little piece of news for her; it will make her smile—she has a very pretty smile, which reminds me of the gallant Blyth. And now, my child, the third piece of news concerns yourself—your good, and dutiful, and exceedingly sensible self. Ahem!" cried the Admiral, as he always did, when he feared that he might have overstepped the truth.

"I know what it is. You need not tell me;" Faith answered, confirming his fear at once; "it is no use, father, it is no good at all—unless you intend to forget your own promise."

"That I shall never do," he replied, while looking at her sadly; "no, my dear child, I shall never attempt to drive instead of lead you. But you have not heard me out as yet. You don't even know who it is I mean."

"Oh yes I do, I know well enough, father. I am not like Dolly, universally admired. Because I do not want to be. You mean Lord Dashville—can you tell me that you don't?"

"No, my dear;" Sir Charles was a little surprised that Faith should be so quick, for (like most people of gentle nature) she was taken to be slow, because she never snapped; "I cannot

deny that it is Lord Dashville, because that is the man, and no other. But how you could tell surpasses me, and it shows that he must be very often in your mind"—the Admiral thought he had caught her there—"now can you say anything against him? Is he not honest, manly, single-minded, faithful as yourself, I do believe, good looking, well-bred, a Tory, and a gentleman, certain to make any woman happy whom he loves? Can you say a syllable against all that?"

"No," replied Faith; a very long slow "no," as if she only wished she could say something hard about him.

"Very well;" her father went on with triumph, "and can you deny that he is just the person you might have taken a great liking to—fallen in love with, as they call it—if only he had come, before your mind was full of somebody else, a very fine young fellow, no doubt; but—my darling, I won't say a word against him, only you know what I mean too well. And are you for ever to be like a nun, because it has pleased the Lord to take him from you?"

"Lord Dashville has not advanced himself in my good opinion, if he cares for that," said Faith, starting sideways, as a woman always does, from the direct issue, "by going to you, when I declined to have anything more to say to him."

“ My dear, you are unjust,” replied Sir Charles ; “ not purposely, I know ; for you are the most upright darling that can be, in general. But you accuse young Dashville of what he never did. It was his good mother, the Countess of Blankton, a most kind-hearted and ladylike person, without any nonsense about her, who gave me the best cup of tea I ever tasted, and spoke with the very best feeling possible. She put it so sweetly, that I only wish you could have been there to hear her.”

“ Father, what is the good of it all ? You hate turn-coats, even worse than traitors. Would you like your daughter to be one ? And when she would seem to have turned her coat—for the ladies wear coats now, the horrid ugly things ! —for the sake of position, and title, and all that. If Lord Dashville had been a poor man, with his own way to make in the world, a plain Mister, there might have been more to be said for it. But to think that I should throw over my poor darling, because he will come home without a penny, and perhaps tattooed, but at any rate turned black, for the sake of a coronet, and a heap of gold—oh father, I shall break down, if you go on so.”

“ My dear girl, I will not say a word to vex you. But you are famous for common sense, as well as every other good quality, and I would ask

you to employ just a little of it. Can you bear me to speak of your trouble, darling?"

"Oh yes, I am so well accustomed to it now; and I know that it is nothing compared to what thousands of people have to bear. Sometimes I am quite ashamed of giving way to it."

"You do not give way to it, Faith. No person can possibly say that of you. You are my brave, unselfish, cheerful, sweet-natured, upright, and loving child. Nobody knows, but you and I—and perhaps I know it, even more than you do—the greatness of the self-command you use, to be pleasant and gay and agreeable, simply for the sake of those around you."

"Then, father," cried Faith, who was surprised at this, for the Admiral had never said a word about such matters, "you think after all that I am—that I am almost as good as Dolly!"

"You jealous little vixen, I shall recall every word I have said in your favour. My child, and my pride, you are not only as good as Dolly, but my best hope is that when Dolly grows older she may be like you. Don't cry, darling; I can't stand crying, when it comes from eyes that so seldom do it. And now that you know what I think of you, allow me to think a little for you. I have some right to interfere in your life; you will allow that—won't you?"

"Father, you have all right; and a thousand

times as much, because you are so gentle about using it."

"I calls that bad English—as Zeb Tugwell says, when he doesn't want to understand a thing. But my pretty dear, you must remember that you will not have a father always. Who will look after you, when I am gone, except the Almighty?—and He does not do it, except for the few who look after themselves. It is my duty to consider these points, and they override sentimentality. To me it is nothing that Dashville will be an Earl, and a man of great influence, if he keeps up his present high character; but it is something to me, that I find him modest, truthful, not led away by phantoms, a gentleman—which is more than a nobleman—and with his whole heart given to my dear child, Faith."

Faith sighed heavily, partly for herself, but mainly perhaps for the sake of a fine heart sadly thrown away on her. "I believe he is all that;" she said.

"In that case, what more can you have?" pursued the triumphant Admiral. "It is one of the clearest things I ever knew, and one of the most consistent"—consistent was a great word in those days—"as well as in every way desirable. Consider, not yourself—which you never do—but the state of the Country, and of Dolly. They have made me a baronet, for being away from

home nearly every night of my life ; and if I had Dashville to see to things here, I might stay away long enough to be a lord myself, like my late middy the present Duke of Bronte."

Faith laughed heartily. " You call me jealous ! My dear father, I know that you could have done a great deal more than Lord Nelson has ; because he learned all that he knows from you. And now, who is it that really defends the whole south coast of England against the French ? Is it Lord Nelson ? He has as much as he can do to look after their fleet in the Mediterranean. Admiral Cornwallis, and Sir Charles Darling are the real defenders of England."

" No, my dear, you must never say that, except of course in private. There may be some truth in it ; but it would be laughed at in the present condition of the public mind. History may do me justice ; but after all it is immaterial. A man who does his duty should be indifferent to the opinion of the public, which begins more and more to be formed less by fact than by the newspapers of the day. But let us return to more important matters. You are now in a very sensible frame of mind. You see what my wishes are about you, and how reasonable they are. I should be so happy, my darling child, if you would consider them sensibly, and yield some little of your romantic views. I would not

ask you, unless I were sure that this man loves you as you deserve, and in his own character deserves your love."

"Then father, will this content you, dear? Unless I hear something of Erle Twemlow, to show that he is living, and still holds to me, in the course of another twelvemonth, Lord Dashville, or anybody else, may try—may try to take his place with me. Only I must not be worried—I mean, I must not hear another word about it, until the time has quite expired."

"It is a very poor concession, Faith. Surely you might say half a year. Consider, it is nearly three years now—"

"No, papa, I should despise myself, if I were so unjust to one so unlucky. And I only go so much from my own wishes, because you are such a dear and good father. Not a bit of it for Lord Dashville's sake."

"Well, my poor darling," the Admiral replied, for he saw that she was upon the brink of tears, and might hate Lord Dashville, if further urged; "half a loaf is better than no bread. If Dashville is worthy of your constant heart, he will stand this long trial of his constancy. This is the tenth day of August 1804. I hope that the Lord may be pleased to spare me till the 10th of August 1805. High time for them to come and lay the cloth. I am as hungry as a hunter."

CHAPTER XX.

CATAMARANS.

NAPOLEON had shown no proper dread of the valiant British volunteers, but kept his festival in August, and carried on his sea-side plans, as if there were no such fellows. Not content with that, he even flouted our blockading fleet, by coming out to look at them. And if one of our frigates had shot straight, she might have saved millions of lives, and billions of money, at the cost of one greatly bad life. But the poor ship knew not her opportunity, or she would rather have gone to the bottom than lost it.

Now the French made much of this affair, according to their nature; and histories of it, full of life and growth, ran swiftly along the shallow shore, and even to Paris, the navel of the earth. French men of letters—or rather of papers—declared that all England was smitten with dismay; and so she might have been, if she had heard of it. But as our neighbours went home again, as soon as the water was six fathoms deep, few English-

men knew that they had tried to smell a little of the sea-breeze, outside the smell of their in-shore powder. They were pleased to get ashore again, and talk it over, with vivid description of the things that did not happen.

“ Such scenes as these tended much to agitate England ; ” writes a great French historian ; “ the British Press, arrogant and calumnious, as the Press always is in a free country, railed much at Napoleon and his preparations ; but railed, as one who trembles at that which he would fain exhibit as the object of his laughter.” It may have been so, but it is not to be seen in any serious Journal of that time. He seems to have confounded coarse caricaturists, with refined and thoughtful journalists ; even as, in the account of that inshore skirmish, he turns a gun-brig into a British frigate. However, such matters are too large for us.

It was resolved at any rate to try some sort of a hit at all these very gallant Frenchmen (moored under their own batteries, and making horse-marines of themselves), whenever Neptune, the father of the horse, permitted. The jolly English tars, riding well upon the waves, sent many a broad grin through a spy-glass at Muncher Crappo tugging hard to get his nag into his gun-boat, and then to get him out again, because his present set of shoes would not be worn out

in England. Every sailor loves a horse, regarding him as a boat on legs, and therefore knowing more about him than any landlubber may feign to know.

But although they would have been loth to train a gun on the noble animal, who was duly kept beyond their range, all the British sailors longed to have a bout with the double tier of hostile craft moored off the shore within shelter of French batteries. Every day they could reckon at least two hundred sail of every kind of rig invented since the time of Noah, but all prepared to destroy instead of succouring the godly. It was truly grievous to see them there, and not be able to get at them, for no ship of the line or even frigate could get near enough to tackle them. Then the British Admiral, Lord Keith, resolved after much consultation to try what could be done with fire-ships.

Blyth Scudamore, now in command of the *Blonde*, had done much excellent service, in cutting off stragglers from the French flotilla, and driving ashore near Wimereux some prâmes and luggers coming from Ostend. He began to know the French coast and the run of the shoals, like a native pilot; for the post of the *Blonde*, and some other light ships, was between the blockading fleet and the blockaded, where perpetual vigilance was needed. This sharp service

was the very thing required to improve his character, to stamp it with decision and self-reliance, and to burnish his quiet contemplative vein with the very frequent friction of the tricks of mankind. These he now was strictly bound not to study, but anticipate; taking it as first postulate that every one would cheat him, if permitted. To a scrimpy and screwy man, of the type most abundant, such a position would have done a deal of harm, shutting him up into his own shell harder, and flinting its muricated horns against the world. But with the gentle Scuddy, as the boys at school had called him, the process of hardening was beneficial; as it is with pure gold, which cannot stand the wear and tear of the human race, until it has been reduced by them at least to the mark of their twenty carats.

And again it was a fine thing for Scudamore—even as a man too philanthropic was strengthened in his moral tone (as his wife found out) by being compelled to discharge the least pleasant of the duties of a county-sheriff—or if not a fine thing, at least it was a wholesome and durable corrective to all excess of lenience, that duty to his country and mankind compelled the gentle Scuddy to conduct the western division of this night-attack.

At this time there was in the public mind,

which is quite of full feminine agility, a strong prejudice against the use of fire-ships. Red-hot cannon-balls, and shrapnel, langrage, chain-shot, and Greek fire,—these and the like were all fair warfare, and France might use them freely. But England, (which never is allowed to do, without hooting and execration, what every other country does with loud applause,) England must rather burn off her right hand than send a fire-ship against the ships full of fire for her houses, her cottages, and churches. Lord Keith had the sense to laugh at all that stuff; but he had not the grand mechanical powers, which have now enabled the human race, not to go, but to send one another to the stars. A clumsy affair called a catamaran, the acephalous ancestor of the torpedo, was expected to relieve the sea of some thousands of people who had no business there.

This catamaran was a waterproof box, about twenty feet long, and four feet wide, narrowed at the ends, like a coffin for a giant. It was filled with gunpowder, and ballasted so that its lid, or deck, was almost awash; and near its stern was a box containing clock-movements that would go for about ten minutes, upon the withdrawal of a peg outside, and then would draw a trigger and explode the charge. This hideous creature had neither oar nor sail, but demanded to be towed to the tideward of the enemy, then

have the death-watch set going, and be cast adrift within hail of the enemy's line. Then as soon as it came across their mooring cables, its duty was to slide for a little way along them in a friendly manner, lay hold of them kindly with its long tail, which consisted of a series of grapping-hooks buoyed with cork; and then bringing up smartly alongside of the gun-boats, blow itself up, and carry them up with it. How many there were of these catamarans is not quite certain, but perhaps about a score, the intention being to have ten times as many, on the next occasion, if these did well. And no doubt they would have done well, if permitted; but they failed of their purpose, like the great Guy Fawkes, because they were prevented.

For the French by means of teacherous agents—of whom perhaps Caryl Carne was one, though his name does not appear in the despatches—knew all about this neat little scheme beforehand, and set their wits at work to defeat it. Moreover they knew that there were four fire-ships, one of which was the *Peggy* of Spring-haven, intended to add to the consternation and destruction wrought by the catamarans. But they did not know that, by some irony of fate, the least destructive and most gentle of mankind was ordered to take a leading part in shattering man, and horse, and even good dogs into vapours.

Many quiet horses, and sweet-natured dogs (whose want of breeding had improved their manners) lived in this part of the great flotilla, and were satisfied to have their home, where it pleased the Lord to feed them. The horses were led to feed out of the guns, that they might not be afraid of them ; and they struggled against early prejudice, to like wood as well as grass, and to get sea-legs. Man put them here to suit his own ideas ; of that they were quite aware, and took it kindly, accepting superior powers, and inferior use of them, without a shade of question in their eyes. To their innocent minds it was never brought home, that they were tethered here, and cropping clots instead of clover, for the purpose of inspiring in their timid friends ashore the confidence a horse reposes in a brother horse, but very wisely doubts about investing in mankind. For instance, whenever a wild young animal, a new recruit for the cavalry, was haled against his judgment by a man on either side to the hollow-sounding gangway over dancing depth of peril, these veteran salts of horses would assure him, with a neigh from the billowy distance, that they were not drowned yet, but were walking on a sort of gate, and got their victuals regular. On the other hand, as to the presence of the dogs, that requires no explanation. Was there

ever a time or place, in which a dog grudged his sprightly and disinterested service, or failed to do his best when called upon? These French dogs, whom the mildest English mastiff would have looked upon, or rather would have shut his eyes at, as a lot of curs below contempt, were as full of fine ardour for their cause and country, as any noble hound that ever sate like a statue on a marble terrace.

On the first of October, all was ready for this audacious squibbing of the hornet's nest, and the fleet of investment (which kept its distance according to the weather and the tides) stood in ; not bodily so as to arouse excitement, but a ship at a time sidling in towards the coast, and traversing one another's track, as if they were simply exchanging stations. The French pretended to take no heed, and did not call in a single scouting craft, but showed sign of having all eyes shut. Nothing however was done that night, by reason perhaps of the weather ; but the following night being favourable, and the British fleet brought as nigh as it durst come, the four fire-ships were despatched after dark, when the enemy was likely to be engaged with supper. The sky was conveniently overcast, with a faint light wandering here and there, from the lift of the horizon, just enough to show the rig of a vessel and her length, at a distance of about

a hundred yards. Nothing could be better—thought the Englishmen; and the French were of that opinion too, especially as Nelson was not there.

Scudamore had nothing to do with the loose adventure of the fire-ships, the object of which was to huddle together this advanced part of the flotilla, so that the catamarans might sweep unseen into a goodly thicket of vessels, and shatter at least half-a-dozen at once.

But somehow the scheme was not well carried out, though it looked very nice upon paper. One very great drawback, to begin with, was that the enemy were quite aware of all our kind intentions; and another scarcely less fatal was the want of punctuality on our part. All the floating coffins should have come together, like a funeral of fifty from a colliery; but instead of that they dribbled in, one by one, and were cast off by their tow-boats promiscuously. Scudamore did his part well enough, though the whole thing went against his grain; and the four catamarans under his direction were the only ones that did their duty. The boats of the *Blonde* had these in tow, and cast them off handsomely at the proper distance, and drew the plugs which set their clock-springs going. But even of these four only two exploded, although the clocks were not American, and those two

made a tremendous noise, but only singed a few French beards off. Except indeed that a fine old horse, with a white Roman nose and a bright chesnut mane, who was living in a flat-bottomed boat, broke his halter, and rushed up to the bows, and gave vent to his amazement, as if he had been gifted with a trumpet.

Hereupon a dog, loth to be behind the times, scampered up to his side, and with his fore-feet on the gunwale, contributed a howl of incalculable length and unfathomable sadness.

In the hurly of the combat, and confusion of the night, with the dimness streaked with tumult, and the water gashed with fire, that horse and this dog might have gone on for ever, bewailing the nature of the sons of men,—unless a special fortune had put power into their mouths. One of the fire-ships, as scandal did declare, was that very ancient tub indeed—that could not float on its bottom—the *Peggy* of Springhaven, bought at thrice her value, through the influence of Admiral Darling. If one has to meet every calumny that arises, and deal with it before going further, the battle that lasted for a fortnight and then turned into an earthquake, would be a quick affair compared with the one now in progress. Enough that the *Peggy* proved by the light she gave, and her grand style of burning to the water's edge before she blew up, that

she was worth at least the hundred pounds Widow Shanks received for her. She startled the French more than any of the others, and the strong light she afforded in her last moments shone redly on the anguish of that poor horse and dog. There was no sign of any one to help them, and the flames in the background redoubled their woe.

Now this apparently deserted prâme, near the centre of the line, was the *Ville de Mayence*; and the flag of Rear-Admiral Lacrosse was even now flying at her peak. “We must have her, my lads,” cried Scudamore, who was wondering what to do next, until he descried the horse and dog and that fine flag; “let us board her, and make off with all of them.”

The crew of his launch were delighted with that. To destroy is very good; but to capture is still better; and a dash into the midst of the enemy was the very thing they longed for. “Ay, ay, sir,” they cried, set their backs to their oars, and through the broad light that still shone upon the waves, and among the thick crowd of weltering shadows, the launch shot like a dart to the side of the foe.

“Easy all! Throw a grapple on board,” cried the young commander; and as the stern swung round, he leaped from it, and over the shallow bulwarks, and stood all alone on the

enemy's fore-deck. And alone he remained, for at that moment, a loud crash was heard, and the launch filled and sank, with her crew of sixteen plunging wildly in the waves.

This came to pass, through no fault of their own, but a clever device of the enemy. Admiral Lacrosse, being called away, had left his first officer to see to the safety of the flag-ship and her immediate neighbours; and this brave man had obtained permission to try a little plan of his own, if assailed by any adventurous British boats, in charge of the vessels explosive. In the bows of some stout, but handy boats, he had rigged up a mast with a long spar attached; and by means of a guy at the end of that spar, a brace of heavy chain-shot could be swung up and pitched headlong into any boat alongside. While the crew of Scudamore's launch were intent upon boarding the *prâme*, one of these boats came swiftly from under her stern, and with one fling swamped the enemy. Then the Frenchmen laughed heartily, and offered oars and buoys for the poor British seamen to come up as prisoners.

Scudamore saw that he was trapped beyond escape; for no other British boat was anywhere in hail. His first impulse was to jump overboard and help his own drowning men; but before he could do so an officer stood before him, and said,

—“Monsieur is my prisoner. His men will be safe, and I cannot permit him to risk his own life. Mon Dieu, it is my dear friend, Captain Scudamore!”

“And you, my old friend, Captain Desportes! I see it is hopeless to resist”—for by this time, a score of Frenchmen were round him—“I can only congratulate myself, that if I must fall, it is into such good hands.”

“My dear friend, how glad I am to see you!” replied the French Captain, embracing him warmly; “to you I owe more than to any man of your nation. I will not take your sword. No, no, my friend. You shall not be a prisoner, except in word. And how much you have advanced in the knowledge of our language, chiefly, I fear, at the expense of France! And now you will grow perfect, at the expense of England.”

END OF VOL. II.

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